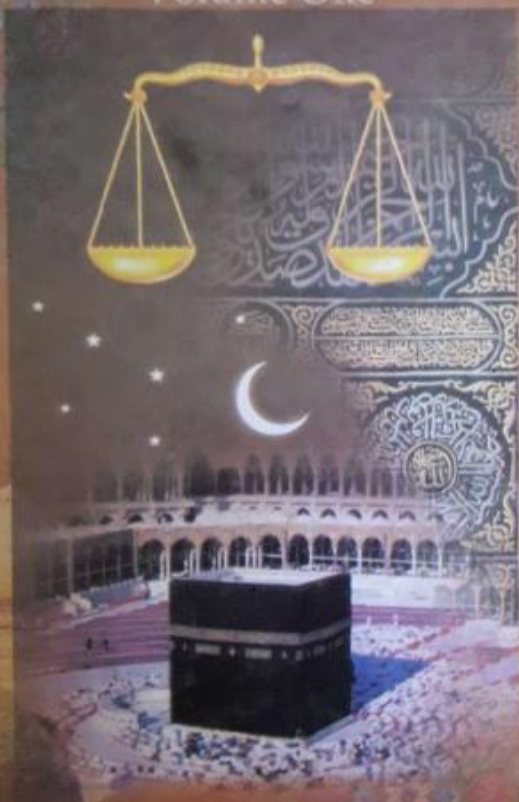


# The History of **ISLAM**

Volume One



By: **Akbar Shah Najeebabadi**

Revised by: **Safi-ur-Rahman Mubarakpuri**

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**(Volume One)**

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## Publishers Note

We are presenting before you the *History of Islam* in three volumes. This book was originally written in the Urdu language in 1922 (1343 AH) by Akbar Shah Khan Najeebabadi. This was the time about 25 years before the partition of Indian Subcontinent into Pakistan and India. For the purpose of brevity, the compiler has presented the authentic events in concise form from the famous histories of Islam written in the Arabic and Persian languages by the great Muslim historians like Tabari, Ibn Athir, Mas'udi, Abul-Fida', Ibn Khaldun and Suyuti, apart from getting benefited from the authentic books of *Ahadith* for the compilation of the part about the biography of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. So, this compilation is actually the extract of the works of the famous Muslim historians.

Although Islam, the religion of Allāh, has been sent from the beginning with Adam ؑ, the father of man, but it is recognized as the religion which our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ brought to the mankind. So, this compilation has the mention of our Prophet ﷺ in the start. After that, useful information has been added about history, its beginning and its benefits, and some mention of the best possible ruling system for mankind has been presented which Islam advocates. Then the book takes its course of history from the conditions

prevalent in Arabia before Islam, and moves forward to the Prophet's life history, the Rightly-Guided Caliphate and then to the other caliphates and kingdoms after it.

This book was the need of the time to present the true Islamic events and their actual causes before the English readers because other books in English found on the Islamic history have been written by such authors and compilers who did no justice in presenting the true picture of Islamic Era but their prejudice prevented them from doing so.

We hope that the readers will find this compilation of great help in the study of Islamic history. The famous scholar Safi-ur-Rahman Mubarakpuri has revised the Urdu edition before its translation to check the authenticity aspect.

The translation was done by the Translation Department of Darussalam, and every care has been taken to reproduce the events and the names of the persons and places as accurately as possible. We thank all the persons who have cooperated with us to complete this task and produce it before you into a presentable form. May Allāh accept our humble efforts in this regard and send His peace and blessings on our Prophet Muhammad, his Companions and his followers.—*Amin!*

**Abdul Malik Mujahid**  
General Manager  
Darussalam



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## **Foreword**

### **There is no God except Allāh**

A glance at world history makes it clear beyond doubt that, in every country of the world and in every age, all the Prophets, reformers, guides and founders of religions had belief in one God, and all of them made all-out efforts to convince their people of the existence of one Elevated Creator. Although Adam, Nūh (Noah), Ibrahim (Abraham), Mūsa (Moses) ﷺ and Muhammad ﷺ lived in ages hundreds and thousands of years far from one another, but their teachings had Oneness of the Creator as the common factor.

Krishnji, Ramchandrajī, Gautama Buddha and Guru Nanak happened to be in India; Kaiqbad and Zoroaster in Iran; Confucius in China, Luqmān in Greece; Yūsuf (Joseph) ﷺ in Egypt; Lūt ﷺ in Syria and Palestine — but Oneness of God lies at the base of the teachings of all.

Almost all men and children, old and young, male and female, Christians and Jews etc., believe in Allāh the Almighty. May be, some people in very small number, refuse to utter the name of God but within their hearts they too feel His Presence. They have to admit that this process of cause and effect goes on created and supervised by some power wise to the extreme. This Wise and Well-Intentioned One is known as Allāh the Almighty.

None but the insane can reject the unanimous belief of the men of intellect and the magnificent creation of Allāh the Almighty.

## **Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allāh**

The magnificent kingdom of Rome had already been broken into pieces and its semi-brute laws and constitution had become distorted enough to wipe out whatever good points happened to be therein. Persian Empire had become the storehouse of corruption and atrocities; China and Turkistan appeared to be the haven of bloodshed and ferocity; in India, the administrations of Asoka and Kanishka were non-existent; none could even think of the reign of Maharaja Vikramajet, nor was there any model of Buddhism nor of Brahmanism.

Those paying respects to Buddha would commit amply shameful acts for the sake of power and worldly comforts or out of weakness in belief. Those reading the rosary of Shri Krishn had no hesitation in making men the most honorable among the created things to prostrate before the vegetables and the stones. If Europe was like a forest with its men as bloodthirsty and ferocious as the beasts, the whole of Arabia had been reduced to the state of animality. In short, nowhere in the world human race appeared sticking to its pure quality of humanness and nobility. In a situation when the entire world had turned dark and dismal, it was the duty of the people of India to ponder over the fourth chapter of Gita where Shri Krishn Maharaj says:

“O Arjun! Whenever faith falls in jeopardy and faithlessness grows, I provide safety to the virtuous and establish faith by wiping the evils out.”

It was the sheer duty of the Persians to come out in search of a guide as per the dictates of Zoroaster. It was for the Jews to wait for the appearance of the light from the peaks of the Faran range and held themselves back from stopper stone becoming the cornerstone. It was the bounden duty of the Christians to make the prayer of Ibrahim (Abraham) and the glad tidings of Jesus, center of their hope. But the global corruption and disruption and all-round darkness had caused

human eyes to become so dark and blind that nobody was conscious enough to take himself to be ailing and go ahead for any medicine.

In such an age and in a territory like Arabia, Muhammad ﷺ rose to remove the mischief of polytheism, darkness of idolatry, pollution of corruption and disruption and defilement of vices and shamelessness, and raising the voice of *La ilāha illallāh*, he performed his singular and sacred duty of making men out of men-like people, and men to be men of high morals, and such noble people to be men of God to change darkness into light, righteousness, peace, uprightness and virtue; and carve pure Muslims out of the deviated, idolaters and evil persons.

Nūh ؑ was forced by the circumstances to do them away with the sword of "My Lord! Leave not one of the disbelievers on the earth!" (71:26) after his relentless efforts of hundreds of years to bring the deviated people of Iraq and Arabia back to the right path. Mūsa ؑ tried hard to show the Egyptians and the arrogant king the right path but at last, Mūsa (Moses) ؑ and Children of Israel saw the sight about which the noble Qur'ān then said:

"...and drowned Pharaoh's people while you were looking (at them, when the sea-water covered them)." (2:50)

It is for this that Maharaja Ramchandrajī invaded Lanka and fought with the demons, and Shri Krishn Maharaj persuaded Arjun to fight in the battlefield of Krukshetra, and had to destroy the defying Kurūs at the hands of the Pandūs. In Iran, Zoroaster made the wrestling of Isphandiyar and the Empire of Kiyani the base of his preaching and propagation of his faith.

But ancient scriptures and sociological traditions reaching the erudite scholars are unanimous that all the revered founders of religions and honorable guides in the way of righteousness have no example to show that, in a short span of less than 25 years, the worst country and the ignorant and brute people became the teacher and the most civilized and well-mannered people on the earth. In less than a hundred years, i.e., in 80 years only the followers of the Faith brought by Muhammad ﷺ encompassed an area ranging from Atlantic Ocean to Pacific Ocean, i.e., up to the eastern coast of China, and, to say, the whole of the civilized world. This world of ours cannot present any



other example of this miraculous success. And if the teaching of Islam is superior to all other religious codes and doctrines for its supreme qualities, who can then question the status of Muhammad ﷺ, being the best of all mankind, the Seal of the Prophets and the Mercy for the world? And who can muster courage to challenge the Divine claim for the Glorious Qur'ân brought by the Prophet ﷺ to be matchless and irrefutable? As the Qur'ân says:

"Verily, We, it is We Who have sent down the *Dhikr* (the Qur'ân) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption)." (15:9)

History stands as the most effective and valuable source of putting nations on the course of progress and prosperity and saving them from the path of disgrace and degradation. Whenever nations have gone up to great heights, they have achieved inspiration from nothing but history.

The Noble Qur'ân has also told us that the study of history was quite essential for human grace and success in this world and the Hereafter. The events of the past nations remind us that such and such nations bore the brunt of their evil deeds while some others achieved grand success on account of their good deeds. Events of Adam, Nûh, Ibrahim, Mûsa and others and the plights of Pharaoh, Nimrod, Ad, Thamûd etc., have not been mentioned in the Noble Qur'ân for the sake of amusement and entertainment and to bring about sleep, but for producing in us courage to perform good deeds and keep away from misdeeds, and changing our present into bright future.

The Prophets who have happened to be the greatest well-wishers and most affectionate of all for mankind, have always reminded them of their past history to save them from destruction. None among the great leaders and reformers of the world appears to have ignored the past conditions and events in bringing about alertness and consciousness among the unconscious and self-denying people of their times. It is because of this, every sermonizer or speaker has recourse to interesting historical events to encourage and activate their audience. Among the past heroes too, we refer those who are closely related to us nationally and religiously, and they exert more influence on our lives. The study of the lives and deeds of Rustam,

Isphandiyar and Gustap can arouse sense of religious zeal, justice and equity more for the Iranians and Parsees than the Jains or Indians. Similarly the stories of Bhim, Arjun, Vikarmajeet and Prithivi Raj influence the Hindus far more than the Christians.

Today, when they have become aware of the influences and consequences of the histories of nations and the fact has come to light that this is the only way of bringing a nation back to life and keep it alive, we see with our naked eyes that those nations which are bereft of glorious histories, present concocted stories and fabricated fictions in the name of their histories studded with sparkling events and scintillating accounts to fill the minds and hearts of the individuals and youths of their nations so that they come to believe them.

These shameless efforts of transforming wrong into right go on just for the sake of convincing their people of their past grandeur without which no nation could be aroused to compete with others in the race of achieving excellence in various fields of human life and development. This is the reason why the nation antagonistic and hostile to another one tries to distort its history and render its men ignorant of and careless about their history.

### **Magnificent Deeds of the Muslims**

Among the nations of the world, Muslims are the only nation which is replete with splendid deeds and marvelous performance. And, above all, it has such tested and trusted knowledge and information about the deeds of its elders and heroes which are irrefutable and beyond all doubts. The Muslims need not be introduced to the Iliad and the Odyssey of Homer, nor they are in need of Mahabharat and Ramayan, for they, in their real history, have all kinds of more splendid and amazing models than those of Iliad and the Odyssey, and Mahabharat and Ramayan contain.

The Muslims have also nothing to do with the Shahnamah of Firdausi and tales of the Spartans; for every page of their history can present many Rustams and the Spartans. The Muslims need not hear the stories of Nushirwan the Just and Hâtim Tâi; for in their true and authentic history, countless Hâtim and Nushirwan appear radiating light and luster. The

Muslims also require no Aristotle or Bacon, Ptolemy or Newton; for in the assembly of their ancestors, such philosophers and astronomers are present which is a matter of pride for them.

How pitiable and amazing it is that, at a time, when there is tough competition among the nations of the world to excel one another, the Muslims, despite having the most glorious history, appear to be detached and careless as regards their history. The class which may be said to be more wakeful and vigilant among the Muslims, also quotes in its lectures, speeches, writings, articles, magazines, newspapers and books any eminent person from Europe or Christian world wherever it needs to cite example of high morals or amazing performance, since it is unaware of such personalities among the Muslims.

Who can deny this fact that the educated class among the Muslims quote in their speeches and writings names of Hannibal, Shakespeare, Bacon, Newton etc., more frequently than those of Khālid bin Walid, Salahuddin Ayubi, Hassān bin Thābit, Firdausi, Tusi, Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and Bu Ali Sina (Avicenna). The sole reason behind this is that the Muslims are unaware of and careless about their history. And they are so, firstly, because they are much less fond of knowledge in comparison to other nations; secondly, they have least opportunity and leisure for acquiring knowledge; thirdly, Government schools and colleges have almost wiped out Islamic educational institutions in India; fourthly, the class which is generally called the educated class among the Muslims and which is considered to be forerunner of the Indian Muslims, comes out totally from the Government schools and colleges where Islamic history does not form part of the syllabus or if it is there, it is something other than what is known as history of Islam. After obtaining diploma from colleges, the age of acquiring further education is almost passed and one cannot have time left at his disposal for studying Islamic Sciences. In all cases, our Muslim educated class has to depend on the Islamic histories written in English in a distorted form by the rivals and opponents of the Muslims.

Before Islam, no nation of any country would turn towards the art of writing history or compile any authentic history of its elders and ancestors. In order to know how much progress in the art of history

writing could have been made before Islam, the scriptures of the Bible and Mahabharat and Ramayan are enough to establish and believe it. The caution, determination and courage the Muslims showed in the preservation and narration of *Ahadith* has no parallel in the inhabited quarter of earth.

The principle of *Hadith* and *Asma'-ur-Rijāl* (branch of knowledge judging merits or otherwise of the narrators of *Hadith*) etc., came to be invented as Sciences by the Muslims for the sake of the service and safeguards of the *Ahadith* of the Prophet ﷺ, against all odds. The strong, firm and unshakable principles invented by the Muslims for research and minute study are so matchless that the like of which the world never witnessed in its long years.

The first memorable work of the Muslims in connection with the art of writing history is the arrangement and compilation of the Science of *Hadith*. And in this connection and in the same manner, they penned the accounts of their caliphs, nobles, kings, scholars, philosophers etc. This whole treasure should be taken as Islamic history. The art of writing history by the Muslims was a new and novel thing and an unexpected blessings and essential asset for the world. When other nations consider their books like Bible and Mahabharat as an asset and a matter of pride, a man is left wonder-struck that the Muslims take out and keep aside even Khatib's history from the shelves of authentic books of history.

European historians, these days, appear to be engaged in hairsplitting and the Muslims seem to be awe-stricken with and all-praise for their perfection in this art and they do it with all the sincerity at their command. But, they are ignorant even of the fact that the *Introduction to History* written by Muslim historian, Ibn Khaldūn belonging to an Arab family of Spain living in North Africa, made the entire Europe and the whole world to understand such unique points about the art of writing history that all the efforts of European historians can be safely sacrificed on the historical sense and acumen of Ibn Khaldūn. But the high ambition and height of fondness of the Muslims can be gauged from the fact that even in the assembly of scholars of Islam, the original history written by Ibn Khaldūn fails to attract their sense of importance and glory, except the *Introduction to History*.

The praiseworthy endeavors of thousands of Muslim historians from Ibn Hisham, Ibn Al-Athîr, Tabari, Mas'ûdi etc., to Ahmad bin Khawand Shah and Zia Barni and up to Muhammad Qasim Faristha and Mulla Badâûni, which are still preserved in fat volumes — each one of them is the portrait of the fascinating magnificence and grandeur of the past Muslim era. And each book on Islamic history needs deep study, and lessons derived from it may be of great use to the readers. But, how pitiable it is that not a single Muslim among a hundred appears to be aware of his Islamic history and goes through history books written by Muslims historians, although a large number of Muslims have the ability to read and understand books of history written by Mill, Carlyle, Eliot, Gibbon and others.

Since all the books of Islamic history have been written in the Arabic and Persian languages and even one among a hundred Muslims in India does not know Arabic or Persian to go through these books, it becomes a bounden duty to write Islamic history in the Urdu language. As now, I am presenting this book, other farsighted persons have an opportunity to write Islamic histories in Urdu in the form better than this humble effort.

### **The Nature of and Facts about Islamic History**

Islamic history is a science or art of permanent nature which has in its fold thousands of voluminous books written by highly experienced and esteemed writers. The Muslim historians have generally penned separately histories of a dynasty or country or any one nation or any one ruler or a king or an event of tremendous importance and value. Some of them have compiled biographies simply of scholars of Islam or philosophers of Islam or saints of Islam and their number reaches up to thousands. This magnificent treasure and collection may be safely brought under the title of Islamic history or the art of Islamic history. And this treasure is multiplying with the passage of time.

The number of Islamic countries and kingdoms is also so large that even a book of history of each one of them, if selected, can not be put in a few shelves but in several rooms of a library. To produce an average book of history in the Urdu language is, in fact, to extract essence of books of Islamic history and to summarize the whole thing. It is easier to

take a photograph of a very big scenery on a card or to put the photograph of a palatial building into the hole of a bead of rosary, but it is very difficult to produce a gist of the whole history of Islam in a volume containing merely two thousand pages. Hence, I myself cannot convincingly say that I have achieved success in my attempt. I leave it to my readers to decide what place does this book occupy as a book of Islamic history and how could the Muslim *Ummah* (nation) be benefited by it.

As for the events and occurrences, for each and every event, I have tried my level best to judge its veracity in the authentic histories of the period when the event occurred. I have then tried to put the gist of the events in my own words. Wherever any sharp difference of opinion arose among the different historians and I found it difficult to decide about the authenticity thereof, I have translated the opinion of the historian exactly, and also expressed my personal opinion where the situation demanded it. I have written this book as a service to Islam and as a matter of religious duty and expect my recompense only from Allāh the Almighty.

I admit my incapability to undertake such a gigantic task and if I, anyhow, come out with success, it is nothing short of wonders. And anyone who takes the course of constructive and sincere criticism exclusively for the sake of reforms, will be welcomed as a benefactor, while the one who does it out of jealousy and malice is to be consigned to Allāh.

Akbar Shah Khan  
Najibabad, India  
Muharram-ul-Harām  
1343 AH

# Introduction

## History

Technically speaking, History is a science which deals with the events and occurrences attached to Prophets, kings, conquerors and eminent personalities and significant events of the ages past. These events give us to know about the way of living, moral values and social learning in the past. Some people have defined History in a manner that humans living together form society and that collection of men gives birth to city, and all the states and conditions undergone by them put together take the shape of historical events, while collecting such events by the latter from the former and leaving them for the posterity as a model for learning lesson and benefiting from, is called History. Some others say that the Arabic word *Tārikh* (history) has been constructed by reversing the last constituent of the word *Takhir*, and *Takhir* means to relate the past with the future; for instance, it is to tell that so-and-so religion or rule or battle occurred at such and such period. Thus, it is the only source of knowing what happened in a certain period. In short, much hairsplitting has been done in defining History. But the sum and substance of all the definitions is the same what has been described above. If the gist of the gist is meant, one can say: "The states and conditions and information which are chronologically arranged make History."

## **Need of History**

History produces in our heart and mind blessed fervor by acquainting us with the living conditions of our elders and ancestors. Human nature has a particular kind of thirst and desire which activates man to travel through the countries, to stroll in gardens and roaming the mountains and forests. This demand of human nature keeps children restless to hear stories of cock-sparrow and hen-sparrow, and to the young to hear tales of parrots and starlings.

And this is what urges to carry out the command of Qur'ân: "So ask of those who know if you know not." (16:43) and turns human mind to go through historical books. And keeping this in view, the Creator of natures has put some taste in heavenly Books. What a great nation was Children of Israel that they had claimed: "We are the children of Allâh and His loved ones." (5:18) but the more they were getting unaware of the states and conditions of their elders and ancestors, the more they kept falling into the quagmire of disgrace. Consequently, Allâh the Almighty has addressed them repeatedly with the words "O Children of Israel! Remember..." and reminded them of the conditions of their elders.

## **Benefits of History**

Study of history sends ambition high, draws toward virtues and keeps away from vices. It develops wisdom and insight, sets farsightedness to grow and creates sense of caution and vigilance. It fills the heart with utmost joys by warding off sadness and gloom. Its study produces in man power to stabilize the truth and falsify the untruth and enhances power of decision. It creates patience and firmness and keeps heart and mind studded with freshness and growth.

In short, knowledge of history is a preacher of thousand preachers and the best source of learning lessons. By studying history, a man finds himself constantly in the company of Prophets, kings, conquerors, friends of Allâh, wise men, scholars and men of consummate skill and learning, and benefits from the fountain of their



knowledge, wisdom, excellence and virtues. And he can easily save himself from the mistakes committed by great kings, viziers, military commanders and philosophers. No other study can fill human hearts with so much joys without putting any mental pressure or causing boredom as a study of history can do.

### **Preservation of Martial Characters through History:**

The nation, fully aware of its historical background and events of the past, can essentially and successfully preserve its national character and distinction, and can restrain its people from getting demoralized in any field of activity; it rather leads them to the lost pinnacle of perfection.

An individual, who is uninformed of the background of his fathers, may indulge in embezzlement. But one who knows that so-and-so among his fathers achieved name and fame on such and such occasion, keeps his honesty intact caring least for lacs of rupees. A person who is uninformed of his fathers' past, may like to escape from the battlefield. But one who is informed of some occasion when one of his fathers took the field in an adverse situation and fought fearlessly even at the cost of his life, will never flee the battlefield, and the very background of his elder will serve as fetter for him.

Now imagine about the high morals like loyalty, truth, piety, modesty, generosity etc. The way the elders and ancestors lived, can produce the spirit of living in the nations and peace in the world. And, perhaps, because of this reason that our neighboring states who have no glorious history of their own, get their purpose served by changing fictitious tales and false stories into historical accounts thinking least about their disgraceful position in the court of the historians.

### **History and Family Virtues:**

Since history contains virtues of the good and evils of the evildoers, an individual belonging to a mean or low family can give only scant attention to true historical accounts. Noble nations preserve the great and unique deeds of their ancestors in their memory which they

follow to keep their nobility intact. Ignoble nations forget even some of the good deeds of their ancestors with the passage of time. To a family or nation whose ancestors have achieved a place of distinction in the sphere of Divine worship, bravery, art and learning, power and grandeur etc., and they have not totally ignored it, they could be activated by producing in them sense of courage, determination, shame and honor. But this device cannot be attempted in case of the mean nations. This is the reason why most often men from the respectable nations, of the honorable lineage, sons of saintly people and the virtuous have especial interest in and fondness for the knowledge of history. None among the atheists and well-known coward had ever been a historian or a leader of the historians.

## **Historian**

The best among the historians is one who is righteous in creed and pure in religious affairs; what he writes should be true as a statement; he is supposed to neither conceal anything nor add anything untrue on his own behalf. Wherever there is chance of stumbling or being victim of misunderstanding, it is permissible to explain and clarify it. It is essential for a historian neither to indulge in sycophancy nor harbor malice against anybody. The style of writing should be simple, intelligible and spontaneous.

Orientation in words and style kills the very purpose of the historiography. This is the reason why histories written in the form of poems are considered below standard with respect to reliability and authenticity. He must be noted for honesty and integrity; he has to be distinguished in speaking truth and acting gracefully; he is to be miles away from nonsense talking, hate and dejection.

The work of compiling, collecting and editing needs very hard labor and determination from a historian, but still, he is not to be very sure of the veracity of events, for sure access to facts behind an event is not guaranteed. Besides having considerable knowledge of astronomy, geology, civics and religions of the world, a historian must be intelligent, discerning and fair-minded along with being a litterateur and a man with perfect command on expression so that he could state his motive easily and effectively. Despite all this, there are some

difficulties which appear to be insoluble; for instance, a narrator relates about someone going to a theatre. Now, such a narration gives a number of reasons about his visit and nothing can be said to be essentially true:

1. The person who went to the theatre is fond of songs.
2. He is not fond of hearing songs but is actually a lover of beauty.
3. He is not a lover of beauty but, all of a sudden, he has fallen in love with an actress.
4. He is not a lover of anybody but he was essentially to meet a friend there.
5. He wanted to write an article on theatre and hence he was bound to go there.
6. He had to deliver a lecture against theatre and hence had to observe it closely.
7. He is employed in secret service and his bounden duty led him there.
8. He himself hated theatre but his friends forced him to go there.
9. He was a godly person and a pious man of high degree, but he went to theatre to dissolve the devotion of the people to himself.
10. He had gone there with the sole purpose of picking pockets.

In short, one narrative can give birth to hundreds of deductions. Moreover, any one healthy deduction needs support of many other causes. Those supportive causes also have different possibilities. If the historian is not just and he feels himself attracted to any predetermined deduction, he very easily and carelessly overlooks opposing pleas and collects favorable arguments by searching them everywhere. Thus he seeks to mislead others by getting himself misled.

## **Readers of History**

As compiling or writing a book of history is an uphill task, to study history and derive full benefits from it is equally difficult. Readers of history should consider the study of the past events as source of taking lesson and warning. They are required to save themselves from

the mistakes and evildoings which the people of the past had committed and paid for them, and try to practice virtue by being acquainted with the best consequences of the virtues of the virtuous. To decry or abuse anyone who has already departed from this world is not an act of bravery. However, it is not a matter of shame to express love for the dead and gone and to invoke blessings of Allāh for him.

To roam the countries, cities, mountains, forests, show places and bazaars, and to study history books are very similar. The only difference is that the experience a tourist collects through tourism and travels of his whole life, the reader of history can collect more of it by the study of history books for a day or a week. The more a reader of history is victim of uncalled-for fanaticism, the more he will find his study of history barren and unproductive for him.

### **Sources of History**

The sources of history are generally divided in three types:

**Solid Evidences:** It refers to all written works like books, memoranda, official papers, commands, decisions, documents etc.

**Repeated Narratives:** It means things that are talk of the town; for instance, stories, poems, proverbs etc.

**Archaeological Finds:** It contains signs and relics, for instance, ruins of the cities, forts, buildings, plaques of buildings, sculpture, ancient weapons, coins, utensils etc.

But it is however, not easy to exploit all these three kinds of materials to compile a book of history. These all appear to be meager without intellectual power of high degree, labor, courage, urge and insight. Besides national character, particular habits, rites and customs, background and geographical conditions prove helpful to the historian.

### **Types of History**

From different respects history may adopt different forms. Quantitatively speaking, it may be divided into two parts — general

and particular. General history makes mention of the people of the whole world; particular kind of history gives knowledge about one particular nation or country or dynastic rule. Qualitatively speaking, it is also of two kinds — narrative and critical.

Narrative history is one where the statement of the narrator is being enlisted on the basis of his personal observation, and the acceptable and satisfactory narratives have been available to the historian; or the historian would have directly observed the occurrence of the event. Such histories are useful most of all because they need not translating conjectural and imaginary matters into real one. Such histories rather bring about reforms in conceptual mistakes and rationalistic faults.

Critical history is one which is based totally on archaeological finds, reported materials and rationalistic frauds, and any statement of the contemporary historian or narrator regarding the event is not available, like the recently compiled histories of ancient Egypt, Iraq, and Iran. However, these histories are also not without utility. But one cannot be sure of real knowledge.

## Historical Ages

Some of the historians have divided history in three ages:

- 1) The Earlier Ages
- 2) The Middle Ages
- 3) The Modern Ages

The Earlier Ages contain historical account from the beginning of the world to the Roman rule. The Middle or Medieval Ages comprise the period from the last of Roman rule to the conquest of Constantinople (Istanbul) under Sultan Muhammad Usmani, the second.

From some great events are traced the periods of the occurrences of some other events, for instance, such and such events occurred so many years after the birth of Adam, or so many years before or after the Deluge. Similarly, years are counted from the birth of Jesus Christ or Vikarmajeet, or the emigration of Muhammad ﷺ from Makkah to Al-Madinah or from the enthroning of a certain king. Currently, Christian or Hijrah Era is in vogue most of all.

## **Islamic History**

Among all the nations and religions of the world, from the beginning to the end, Islam alone is such a religion and Muslims alone are a nation which have their history wholly and solely preserved and intact, and no part thereof has ever been doubtful. The Muslims have never from the days of the Prophet ﷺ up to the present day, acted with negligence and carelessness in reducing states and events to writing and preserving them for days to come. The Muslims are, therefore, privileged to take pride in the fact that they can at any time, compile the whole history of Islam with the help of contemporary historians and eyewitnesses. Moreover, they can very safely show the similar statements about events with unbroken chain of different authoritative narrators.

In short, the Muslims are the only nation which has a complete, exhaustive and authentic history of its own, and no nation of the world can share this peculiarity and distinct feature of this nation. Historians of Islam have practiced as much caution as to take down the event and its nature as it were, without their personal opinion whatever so that the readers are influenced not the least with the views of the historian. Thus, the readers are at liberty to make their own decisions and form their own opinions in their own way, without toeing the line of thinking adopted by the historian. The greatness and glory of Islamic history exerts deeper impressions on heart when it is noticed that any time or any part of Islamic history can be safely put to the acid test of reasoning and it will pass off without any impurity, flaw and defect.

## **History of Histories**

Having seen the ruins of Babylon and Nineveh, pillars of Ad and Iram in the desert of Najd, pyramids and mummified idols of Egypt etc., an urge is aroused in man to know about the builders. They have attempted to write about the Babylonian people and have collected immense materials on account of their incomplete critical analysis. However, the lives and works of the founders of pyramids can be penned through the strange letters available.

Zoroastrian scriptures, Dasatirah Safrang, Bible and the present scriptures, Ramayan of Balmiki Mahabharat are such books which may give some right or wrong information. Idioms, phrases, proverbs, stone weapons, iron tools, ornaments of silver, gold and copper etc., idols of stone, preserved dead bodies of Egypt, pillars of Asoka, Caves of Ellora, idols of Sarnath and Sanchi, Throne of Rustam, Wall of China etc., put together make interesting materials which may shed light not only on the whole inhabited quarter of earth as brightly as it is required, but however, they can bring to light some of the areas here and there, howsoever dim the historical rays happen to be. True or false stories of the Indians, old plaques of the Egyptians, ancient traditions of Chinese, ruins of the Iranians, writings of the Greek—particularly the book of Herodotus, Israelite traditions, Arabic morals—these are all vital and elementary parts of history.

### **Beginning of History**

Roman and Greek eras, particularly from the conquests of Alexander, start that part of history which has presented before us the states and conditions of most of the countries of the world that there is far less chances of the chains being snapped in the middle. And it is from here that history is generally considered to take a start. As the study of histories of Greece, Egypt and Iran fills its readers with joys, they are equally enraged against the Indians, for even in that historical age, India seems to be engulfed in darkness. This utter carelessness of the people living here has always made the historians of the world to shed tears of blood that they always cast fictitious stories in the mould of truth and never allowed truth to take its course. As against the green country India, there is another desert country Arabia, which is contrary to India with respect to authenticity, power of memory, preservation of table of genealogy and narration of events exactly as they occurred. And, hence, even the historical assets of those religions of the Age of Ignorance are reckoned as something valuable.

### **Real Beginning of History**

Now, the Noble Qur'ân is sent down. Arabia overcasts the entire world. All the societies appear to be (according to the Qur'ân) "... scattered

floating particles of dust." (25:23) before Arab society. History, in fact, starts from here. Apart from magnificent task of arranging and compiling *Ahadith* and *Asma'-ur-Rijal*, thousands of Muslim historians are there who have worked such wonders in this field that one is filled with amazement. There is no branch of society or human living which has been left unnoticed or untouched by the Muslims. Authenticity of narration is the life and running spirit behind all historical activities. And the Muslims have taken this aspect into consideration in such magnitude that none except the Muslims as a nation may be cited as an example. The Muslims have devoted their supreme abilities in compiling histories even of other nations and countries. It is the Muslim nation alone which has taken the art of writing history to the level of a science, and the name of Ibn Khaldūn, the originator of the principles of history, will keep receiving laurels till the end of this world. From the time the Muslims have been overcast by clouds of decline and ill-luck as a nation, and lost much of their promptitude in their endeavors in this field, their pupils, i.e., the European historians have picked up from there to some extent.

### **History of Sultanate**

The distinctive feature of man as against other animals is that while the animals have been kept within limits and their required provisions are within their reach without endeavor, humans have been given opportunity to get according to their efforts and struggle. This object may also be described in the manner that man is constantly in a state of travel and is being created to go from lower to higher ranks. Among men one makes more travel or reaches greater heights, looks upon others who are lower or lagging behind, but as he is never to attain perfection, he being higher than others, is also inferior to those above him. He by nature is endowed with the sense of devotion and obedience as has been said:

"And I (Allāh) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone)." (51:56)

Thus, the man who is ahead of others is forced by his very nature to obey some power greater than and superior to him. This explains the existence of kingdom and rule. A king or ruler is only lawfully



perfect, and not in real terms, for real perfection is found in the one who is absolute and not limited, immortal and not mortal, one and not numerous.

And that One Self-Existent is Allāh the Almighty Who is free from every flaw, defect and evil and is the Possessor of all attributes in their perfection. And thus, He is the real King, real Ruler and real Authority. Since man is obeying by nature, hence, he is to obey and follow others as a part of his very nature. And his real Ruler has prevented him from doing so, as has been said:

"Obey Allāh and obey the Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ), and those of you who are in authority." (4: 59)

Shadow law-enforcing authority or king may be only one who is more perfect than others. Hence, it is the demand of human nature to keep under sway whoever appears lesser in position, status and rank. But since, man against his nature, has also the capability of moving towards his downfall instead of rising up, it is the logical aspect of mental attitude to develop a desire for something he doesn't deserve. This is the reason why constant conflict is a common spectacle in the world of rules and kingdoms. Enforcing authorities may be kept in two different categories — spiritual and physical, or to say Prophethood and Sultanate.

The skills required for materialistic rule have been stated in regard to kingdom of Tālūt (Goliath) and Dāwud (David) ﷺ in these words:

"And their Prophet (Samuel) said to them: 'Indeed Allāh has appointed Tālūt (Saul) as a king over you'." (2:247)

When the people heard of the kingship of Tālūt, they objected to it and got the reply:

"Verily, Allāh has chosen him above you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature." (2:247)

It was further said about Dāwud ﷺ:

"... and Dāwud killed Jālūt, and Allāh gave him the kingdom and Al-Hikmah (Prophethood), and taught him of that which He willed." (2:251)

Now, from the study of histories, it comes to light that whoever got an opportunity to become the center of the support of his people and got superiority over others in respect of learning and physical power, he was at once accepted as their ruler and sultan.

Three thousand years ago only physical power, wrestling and bravery added by mental power were considered as essential assets for ruling over others. But when human race gradually developed other qualities, conditions and qualities for kingship were also added. In short, the best and the most valuable person has always been a man to rule. And mischief and trial, conflict and disruption, bloodshed and plunder came to surface only when the undeserving got the throne. And you will find no exception to this rule. Since every man is equal with respect to his nature and rights, hence the acquired qualities and skills alone could lead one to have power and throne, as the Qur'ân says:

"And that man can have nothing but what he does." (53:39)

Every head of the family who becomes the ruler or king is so because of his fine qualities of head and heart. Every village headman is the ruler and king of his village. And this is the model of the rule or government of early ages of humankind which is still existing and we cannot pick holes in this system. Nevertheless, if any flaw or defect is to be found out, it is solely on the basis that any undeserving and incapable person in the family has captured power by foul means, or if the headman of the village, or head of the locality happens to be an undeserving person.

### **Personality and Democracy**

Human race which is, on one hand, the noblest creation of Allâh the Almighty, and the served of the entire universe, has in his nature on the other, to treat any exalted and powerful being as the center and an object of worship, and this demand of human nature leads him to the concept of Oneness of God and to worship one God by rejecting all other false gods. The greatest satanic cunningness and deception was that man put heredity and lineage as precondition for getting throne and forming government. It resulted in undeserving persons not

capable of kingship to become kings and look down upon those who really deserved it. This blunder of mankind gave birth to many evils, corruption and disruption and the children of Adam had to bear the brunt thereof.

The Noble Qur'an after being revealed and Muhammad ﷺ after being commissioned as Prophet, remedied the evil; and this embodiment of the total human qualities, himself led the people of the state and thus put before the world at large best example of the blend of Prophethood and temporal rule at a time. He explained to the human kind the duties of a king and his realm of power. After him, his foremost trained and benefited band, i.e., the noble Companions elected the best among them to rule over them in line with the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ.

Thus, for the first time, broke the satanic spell that heredity could ever play a role in making one a ruler. The choice of Umar Fârooq ؓ after Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ was governed by the same principle. Although Uthmân Ghani ؓ was also chosen without any consideration of heredity and lineage, but some individuals and sections of the people had some reservation about it, and Uthmân Ghani ؓ himself did some favor to his relatives and the people of his own tribe. Hence, his period was not without trials and tribulations.

Thus, it may be safely said that as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ presented his example as a Messenger for 23 consecutive years to redeem humanity, so also from 1 to 10 AH, i.e., for about 10 years, he put before the world glaring example of righteous rule. And as the 23 years of the Prophet ﷺ are worth following for mankind, so the Madnian life of the Prophet ﷺ, the caliphate of Abu Bakr Siddiq and the caliphate of Umar Fârooq ؓ put together and spreading over a span of 23 years, are also worthy of being emulated.

At the end of the Righteous Caliphate, human weakness and satanic swindling once again made hereditary relations necessary for succeeding to the kingdom or rule. And the rule, instead of going to the able and deserving, was unfortunately came to be considered as the right of some particular dynasties. Thus, the unworthy sons of worthy fathers appeared 'gracing' the thrones or seats of power. The

people of those period had to undergo untold miseries and sufferings to get rid of such evil and despotic rulers.

At last, their patience being exhausted, they took recourse to the democracy practiced in France and America etc., today; although like hereditary autocratic rules, democracies also cannot prove a source of blessing for mankind. The only type of government corresponding to human nature and a source of peace and blessing for mankind is one whose model came to be seen in the first four centuries of the Hijrah era. And that is, in fact, the system that lies between democracy and autocracy.

### **Democratic Rule**

In a democratic setup, a person is elected by the people for a period of three or five years and he is called either the President of the republic or the Head of the democratic government. But the President of the republic does not enjoy the same powers which is required by an affectionate ruler of mankind. Even in some ordinary matters the President feels helpless and has to work against his will. It means the government has no real center of power, and government affairs are divided in a manner that they go to belong to all the people of the state.

When seen from a distance, this system of government looks pleasant. And since, the people generally find themselves ruling over themselves and feel that the chains of despotism or tyrannical rule are broken, they are happy with the system, but ultimately they are put to great loss as well.

Human sense of nobility lies against unbridled freedom. This is the reason that in France and America etc., where democratic system is working, the spiritualism desired by the religion is going to the dogs. High morals taught by religion cannot grow and flourish in a country where the flood of democracy is surging. Democratic system of government seeks to put man on a path of such an unnatural freedom that he can no longer retain his Divine values. Pure democratic system is, in fact, a very strong movement of atheism and secularism. As nothing grows in a desert, fish can't live out of water, and man cannot

keep healthy in a dark place and polluted air, in the same way, religious thoughts, restraints and prayers cannot stay and grow in a democratic system of government.

The fundamental principle of religion is restraint and obedience. And one's following of a true religion keeps intact the true feeling of human nature that every high and respectable being is to be given a high place and shown respects, and since, Allâh the Almighty is the Highest of all, one should bow down before Him saying *Subhâna Rabbiyal-A'la* (Glorified be the Lord, the Most High). Every Messenger, every Prophet and every guide in the world has rightly demanded that all men should obey him and carry out his command. And none can deny that human race has always achieved success simply by following and obeying those Messengers, Prophets, guides and leaders.

It is a fact that human race has reached the stage of progress and development from the lowest level of disgrace and depravity. Thus, the system of government which is injurious to the righteous course and sets humanity free from all decent and reasonable restraints, can never prove healthy and beneficial to mankind. Every father wants his son to obey him and it also behooves the son to do so. Every teacher wants his pupils to obey him and the same is demanded of disciples, followers and soldiers, and they must respond to the call in their own interest. But, under the effect of democracy every son, pupil, disciple, follower and soldier looks upon obedience to his father, teacher, saint, leader and commander as a matter of an unpleasant duty to be performed against one's will. And, by and by, all these things are so dissolved that man finds before him nothing but atheism and secularism which ultimately lead to barbarism.

Democracy is basically against sense of religiosity, and hence the more this sense is injured, the more there is chance for peace to go out of sight. Real peace can be established on earth only through religion, but governments have always eaten humble pie in this field. Inside houses, in forests, deserts and pathways, a man is free from the watchful eyes of the police. It is religion alone and not the government which can hold one back from indulging in evil acts of murder, theft, adultery etc. If all the inhabitants of the earth turn

secular, it will become a hell for mankind by freely adopting the course of killing and carnage, theft, adultery, lies, deception, mischief and unmannerly behavior.

In the democracies of Europe and America, we find nothing which could create a sense of envy in us. These are the countries where more irreligiousness is found. In these very countries, human society is more inclined to immodesty, and it is here that breach of promise, disloyalty, self-centeredness, falsehood, deceit etc., have become ingredients of their character. Democratic government can never give birth to any Napoleon, Kaiser, William, Julius Caesar, Temur, Hannibal, Salahuddin, Sulaiman Qanuni, Sher Shah, Alamgir. And, in case one is born, he cannot remain alive, what to speak of the birth of Khâlid bin Walid.

It is, perhaps, the most ugly example of human depravity that we, today, find even Muslims desiring of European and American type of democracy, which is totally against the teachings of Islam and something highly injurious to mankind. Such a shift in Muslim thought is the result of the timidity and lack of courage, and it is reduced to such a state because of ignorance and ignoring the teachings of the Qur'ân and *Hadith*.

### **Autocratic Hereditary Rule**

When a person ascends the throne, his blood relation and natural love demand that his son being inheritor of his property and possessions, should also be his successor as a king. But this is his sheer mistake, for kingship is not his property but a trust entrusted to him by his country and nation. Hence he is not within his rights to put his rule to his disposal and pass it on to anybody at will.

A trust is always consigned to its real master. Hence, it is up to the nation to hand it over to any tested and trusted person most suitable to the job. But it requires utmost courage and very strong resolution to hold the king back from committing breach of trust and confidence. Such dauntless courage can be produced by Islam alone which it has done through the ages and what the Prophet ﷺ had implanted into his Companions.

The Muslims evaded teachings of Islam with the result they lost much of their courage, determination and ambition which Islam had produced in them in the past, and hence, they could not put a check on their rulers. Instead they shut their eyes to the misappropriations of their rulers in every department of life. At last, the ugly practice of forming autocratic hereditary rule which was obliterated during the Righteous Caliphate, was once again brought back to life, and the Muslims as a whole, had to bear the brunt of their agreeing to wrong practice.

Hereditary crown princeship's unreasonable and praise-less practice so often paved the way for most of the unworthy and incapable persons to become rulers of the Muslims — persons who were even lacking in the qualities of getting a seat in the assembly of worthy and civilized men. Certainly there should be only one ruler or caliph or king of the Muslims, but he must be the best among them and they elect him with general agreement or majority opinion. Anybody's birth in the house of a caliph or king doesn't mean that he has necessary abilities to make a worthy ruler.

Had this practice of hereditary rule not been permitted, and the Islamic concept of governance and the ruling system had been as well-guarded as it was during the Righteous Caliphate, the Islamic rule and the Muslims would not have reduced to such a sad plight we see today. But it was the Will of Allāh and hence it came to pass. Had the Muslims opposed it right from the beginning and not slackened their efforts to keep it intact, then although they had to give supreme sacrifices at the outset, but later, none would have mustered courage enough to get his son elected to the throne or declared him his successor. Abu Bakr ؓ had more than one worthy son to make a good ruler but he found Umar ؓ best among the Muslims and recommended his name for the next caliph. Abdullāh ؓ the son of Umar ؓ was, undoubtedly, worthy of being the caliph after his father, but since, Umar Fārooq ؓ was essentially bent upon uprooting this evil practice, issued command that Abdullah bin Umar ؓ should, in no case, be elected caliph.

The greatest folly and blindness of people is that they see with their naked eyes the evils of autocratic rule but still never take the trouble

of going deep into the causes of these evils. By opposing autocracy, they start praising democracy. The main cause behind the evils of autocratic rule is that it had made room for heredity and snatched away from the people the right to elect the ruler of their own choice. Thus, it is the demand of reason that first of all the origin of all evils, i.e., the system of hereditary rule be debarred from making entry to the sphere of human activity. They should make it a point not to allow at any cost the son of a ruler to succeed if he is not worthy of becoming one. And he should be elected with consensus or majority opinion even if he deserves the throne or seat of power. What sort of wisdom it is to commit another such mistake to avoid one. It is the timidity and lack of courage on the part of the public that encourage the despotic and unworthy rulers to go unbridled. The obedience shown with a sense of duty is far apart from one which is done out of cowardice. To make it more clear, we can cite the example of Umar ؓ whose governors would say that they felt Umar's one hand below and another about the jaws and he would tear our jaws apart on slight deviation from the prescribed course. Khâlid bin Walid ؓ receives the order of Umar Fârooq ؓ and he very silently obeys it in spite of being a commander of great victories. Umar ؓ is on the other hand, challenged right on his pulpit and a very common and ordinary person examines his honesty and trusteeship. A woman listens to Umar's speech regarding bridal-money and has the courage to raise objection against a point therein, and the Commander of the Faithful had to admit from his pulpit that even the women of Al-Madinah could inform him of his mistake.

Now, one can easily think of the sort of obedience shown to Umar ؓ, and compare it with the kind of obedience shown to the last Mogul kings in the courts and in the very country they ruled. Royal orders were not carried out not only in the Punjab, Sindh, Deccan, Bengal and other provinces, but also in Agra, Allahabad and Delhi.

### **Autocratic Democratic Rule**

The type of rule Islam has formed on this earth is known as Autocratic-Democratic Rule. The system of rule suggested by Islam lies between pure democracy and pure autocracy. Every Islamic



section has its say in the election of caliphate, king or ruler. In the election of the most suitable and most deserving person for the rule or caliphate, all possible fair means should be made use of, and the best person to be elected at all costs. The Muslims need no institution of law or constitution or formation of any modern system of government, for they possess the noble Qur'ân and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ.

Thus the task of electing best man for the job is also not difficult for the Muslims. The man who knows the Qur'ân and *Hadith* more and acts more upon them is the most deserving of all to become the ruler of the Muslims. To run the administration according to the teachings of the Qur'ân and *Hadith* and to enforce Divine and Prophetic commands, are the main duties of a Muslim ruler.

The Muslims have every right to challenge their rulers if and when he makes even slight deviation from the path set by Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ. But it is incumbent on each and every Muslim to follow every order of the ruler, if it is not contrary to the dictates of the Qur'ân and the *Sunnah* without even thinking to revolt against the ruler. In case a Muslim ruler shows sign of deviation from the right path, he may be deposed then and there. But if he carries out his duties to his nation with Divine sense and good intentions, his deposition would be the height of idiocy after passing a tenure of three or five years.

The caliph of the Muslims happens to be the servant, watchman, guard and trustee of the Muslims; why should then we remove him from a position wherefrom he is serving the Muslims with all the power at his command just for plunging in the trouble of a new experiment. The Muslims do not want their caliph to enact laws for them nor allow him to pass a luxurious life at the cost of public exchequer. The caliph of the Muslims, under a moderate and reasonable system, collects wealth from the wealthy section in reasonable proportion and spends it on the poor, the needy and the orphan for their welfare. Since, a reasonable tax is collected from the wealthy section to be given to the needy, there is no chance of any conflict arising between the capitalists and the laborers which has, now, taken the whole Europe in its grip.

The caliph of the Muslims is the guard and watchman of the Muslims as well as their teacher, guide, commander, servant and king. In important matters and national affairs, for instance, if an enemy country is to be invaded or peace is to be brought about with the hostile power, or troops to be sent to help any people or for protecting the Muslims, or keeping peace in the country, the caliph has to hold consultations with the Muslims for the Qur'ân had ordained him to do so. But the purpose of consultation is not to force the Muslim ruler to toe their line by holding back his own. The sole purpose of such consultation is that the caliph should listen to favorable and unfavorable opinions about the issue and then form his own opinion in the light of wise counsels. The Qur'ân says:

“... and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allâh.” (3:159)

The model of the system of government Islam wants to set up, as mentioned above, may be seen in the era of the Righteous Caliphate. After that, the system of rule changed into autocratic hereditary one. However, the bright points of Islamic teachings and morality kept glaring out the rules established by the Muslims, and taken as a whole, the type of rule set up by the Muslims has no parallel in the annals of history. Democratic governments whose example Europe and America are presenting today, can never come at par with the type of rule Islam wants to establish.

## **Our Starting Point**

Muslim historians have generally started their books from Adam ﷺ while others have done it from the creation of the earth and the heaven. But I shall begin my history of Islam from the last Prophet ﷺ of Allâh, for states of things before him were not beyond doubt, and there was also no particular arrangement of writing history in the world before the Prophet ﷺ. Moreover, it is from him that the beginning of Islamic history is thought of, because it is commonly called that he was the founder of Islam and the people of his *Ummah* alone are called the followers of Islam, otherwise Islam has made its presence on earth right from Adam ﷺ, the father of man.

## Relation between History and Geography

Geography is very closely and strongly related to history and hence the histories recently written in conformity with the European historians contain geography. Even the biographers of the Prophet ﷺ have also included the geography of Arabia to illustrate some points. But since I mean a complete but a brief history of the Muslims, inclusion of geography means writing the geography of the whole world, for the Muslims and their rule belong to the world at large. But this is most difficult if brevity is to be kept in view.

Moreover, I have taken advantage of the good opinion about the Muslims that they must be knowing the geography of the entire world along with the maps of the countries. However, it is a part of my plan to include in the book the maps of countries and states wherever they are needed. However, this book will not contain accounts of the Age of Ignorance, Arab nations, the Quraish, practices of Ignorance etc., in great detail.

In case of the life history of the Prophet ﷺ, I have largely benefited from *Sihah Sittah* (the six famous collections of the Prophet's traditions made by Imam Bukhâri, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Abu Dâwud, Nasa'i and Ibn Mâjah) and preferred *Ahadith* books to the books of history. I have taken out common materials from the history books *Târikh Tabari*, *Târikh Al-Kâmil* of Ibn Athir, *Târikh Mas'udi*, *Târikh Abul-Fida'*, *Târikh Ibn Khaldûn*, *Târikh Al-Khulafa'* of Suyuti etc., and recorded them in my book. And thus the brief account of the whole history has been recorded in the best possible manner.

I have also taken accounts from the books of contemporary historians about Islamic rules established in various countries after the decline and downfall of the Abbasid caliphate. I have also quoted here and there passages from Christian historians, but I have quoted these passages just for the sake of getting support and using them as witnesses. I have firm conviction that compared to the Muslim historians, Christians are far less in true historical qualities. Hence, we should never turn towards them for getting facts.

## Chapter 1

# **The Country of Arabia**

A little mention of Arabia is essential at the outset for the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was born in the city of Makkah and emigrated to another famous city Al-Madinah, which also became the first Islamic capital of the first Islamic State. Arabian Peninsula is the area which converted to Islam completely during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. This country of Arabia was the first center of the grandeur of Islam. It was in this country and in its language that Revelation was sent and the last heavenly Book was revealed, which is the source of guidance to all the countries and nations of the world till the Day of Judgement. It is from this country of Arabia that the light of Islam spread to everywhere in the world. In the city of Makkah lies the Ancient House, the Ka'bah, towards which Muslims come from all over the world and appear together on the plain of Arafât worshipping and praying to Allâh, praising and glorifying His Name. We find here the wealthy and the poor side by side chanting praises of the Creator of the earth and sky. Arabia dominated the entire world and became for it the torchbearer and lamp of guidance.

## **Situation and Physical Features**

On the map of Asia there can be seen a big rectangular peninsula. This is called the Arabian Peninsula or Arabia, which has the following four boundaries:

The Arabian Peninsula is bounded on the east by the Arabian Gulf and that of Oman; on the south by Arabian Sea or Indian Ocean; on the west by the Red Sea; on the north by Jordan and Iraq.

The total area of the Arabian Peninsula is 1,250,000 square miles of which 450,000 square miles is pure desert and forms part of a completely desolate area. The most famous desert is known as *Ar-Rub' Al-Khālī* (the Empty Quarter) which stretches over an area of 250,000 square miles and extends to the southeast from middle of the Arabia. On the north of this vast desert is Al-Ahsa or Bahrain, and Oman lies on the south and east of *Ar-Rub' Al-Khālī*. In the Arabian Gulf, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Muscat are most famous cities. On the south of *Ar-Rub' Al-Khālī*, we find Hadramout and Mahra, which are situated on the coast of the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. To the south and west of *Ar-Rub' Al-Khālī*, is San'ā' which is the famous city of Yemen, situated on the coast of the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea. At the time of the advent of Islam it was the center for Christians in Arabia. To the west of *Ar-Rub' Al-Khālī*, lie Asir and Najrān, which are on the coast of the Red Sea. To the north of Asir, the Red Sea touches a small territory called Tihāmah, which is considered as a part of Hijāz. On the north of *Ar-Rub' Al-Khālī* is Najd in the shape of a square, on the east of which is Bahrain, to the west is Hijāz and on the north is the desert of Iraq and Syria. The name of the northeastern part of Najd is Yamāmah. Hijāz is situated at the west of Najd and east of the Red Sea, it includes the cities of Makkah and Al-Madinah and the harbors of Jeddah and Yanbu. Between Syria and the Hijāz lies a territory called Khaibar and Hija. It is another territory bound by Syria, Hijāz and Najd. Inside *Ar-Rub' Al-Khālī* and between Hadramout and Yamāmah is a famous desolate area called Al-Ahqāf, which was once the dwelling place of the people of Ād. A look at the above mentioned places in the map will give an idea of Arabia and its famous territories.

## **Climate and Inhabitants**

In Arabia there is no river worth mentioning. Almost the entire country comprises of burning desert and barren land and the areas lying along the seacoast alone are in a flourishing state with population. Scarcity of water has made human inhabitation almost impossible in the middle areas. All the populated areas lie at the seacoast except Najd, which is situated to the north of *Ar-Rub' Al-Khālī* and in the middle of the country. Najd is actually a plateau, it is mostly desert and the 'desert range of Najd meets the vast deserts of Syria.

Arabia is dotted with mountains here and there but no mountain is fresh and green. Yemen and Hijāz, situated on the coast of Red Sea, are fresher and greener than the rest of the area. The entire Arabian population is 12.5 million meaning ten people per square mile. [The figures relate to the past, at the time when the book was written.] The sun is very hot there, and sunstroke is so sharp and violent that it is generally considered poisonous. Even the camel, which is purely a desert animal, falls down dead with a stroke of this poisonous and burning wind. The camel is very useful in this country. For hundreds of miles one cannot find a trace of water. The camel is a desert ship. Long journeys are made on its back. Nothing significant grows except dates, and the population generally lives on camel's milk and dates, fish is eaten on the coastal areas. A greater part of the population of this country lives a nomadic life so there are few big flourishing cities. [After the establishment of a single union territory by King Abdul-Aziz bin Āl Saud, and by the current development in Arabian Peninsula, the above mentioned status has been changed.]

The scope of this book doesn't permit more space for writing about the geography of the Arabian Peninsula.

## **Ancient Peoples of Arabia**

Since very early times the progeny of Sām (Shem), the son of Nūh (Noah) ~~is~~, has inhabited Arabia. As regards designating eras, the historians have put the inhabitants of Arabia into three categories

namely, *Arab Bâ'idah*, *Arab Musta'ribah* and *Arab 'Āribah*. Some of them have held both *'Āribah* and *Musta'ribah* as the same and designated them in two categories only *Arab Bâ'idah* and *Arab Bāqiyah*. *Arab Bâ'idah* refers to only those peoples who had inhabited Arabia from the earliest age and they have all perished without leaving any trace behind. *Arab Bāqiyah* means those people who are still found in Arabia. They also form two categories namely, *'Āribah* and *Musta'ribah*. Other historians have designated the Arabs into four categories — *Arab Bâ'idah* or *Arab 'Āribah*, *Arab Musta'ribah*, *Arab Tābi'ah*, and *Arab Musta'jimah*.

### **Arab Bâ'idah:**

Some of the earliest tribes were called Ād, Thamud, Abil, Amâliqah, Tasm, Jadais, Umaim, Jurhum, Hadramout, Hadur and Abd Dakhm etc. These all were the progeny of Laudh bin Sām (Shem) bin Nūh (Noah). They dominated the whole of the Arabian Peninsula and some of their kings expanded their military conquests up to Egypt. Books of history do not give any account about them and their conditions. Ruins of their buildings, archaeological finds, some pillars of stone, ornaments and sculpture have been found in Najd, Ahqâf and Hadramout, which tell us that they were the strongest civilization of their time with much grandeur and awe. Among these tribes, Ād was the most renowned. These people lived in Ahqâf. Ād bin Aus bin Iram bin Sām by whose name this tribe became famous, was the first and foremost king of Arabia. He had three sons, named Shaddâd, Shadid and Iram. They ruled one after another.

About the same Shaddâd bin Ād, Allāmah Zamakhshari has written that he built the city of Iram in the desert of Aden but it is now traceless. The Noble Qur'ān has also made mention of Iram but it refers to the Iram tribe, not the city of Iram nor the garden of Iram. The Iram tribe was perhaps, another name for the Ād tribe or perhaps it was a branch of Ād tribe or the Ād tribe was itself a branch of the Iram tribe, Allāh the Almighty says in the Qur'ān:

"Did you not see how did your Lord treat the Ād of Iram who were of so commanding stature that no creature of such a physical strength was ever born in the cities (of the world)?" (89:6-8)

Mas'udi has written that, before Âd, his father Âs was also a king. A king named Jairun bin Sa'd bin Âd bin Aus of this very dynasty had rampaged Syria and built a house of marble and precious stone, and he had named it Iram. Ibn Asâkir has also mentioned the name of Jairun in his history of Damascus. The Prophet Hud ؑ was sent to the Âd tribe or the people who were raised from the same people. But his people disobeyed him and were sent to their doom. The Glorious Qur'ân has detailed this event. Âd was followed by Abil, Amâliqah, Thamud, and Abd Dakhm, who ruled the country one after another until Ya'rub bin Qahtân brought about their end and set the beginning of a new era. Prophet Saleh ؑ was sent to the Thamud tribe or the people of Thamud. Thamud lived in Hîjr while Yamamah was the place where Tasm and Jadaïs lived; Amâliqah lived in Tihâmah and Jurhum in Yemen. As mentioned above, all the tribes of Arabia were the progeny of Sâ'm, the son of Nûh (Noah) ؑ, which are shown in the genealogical table.

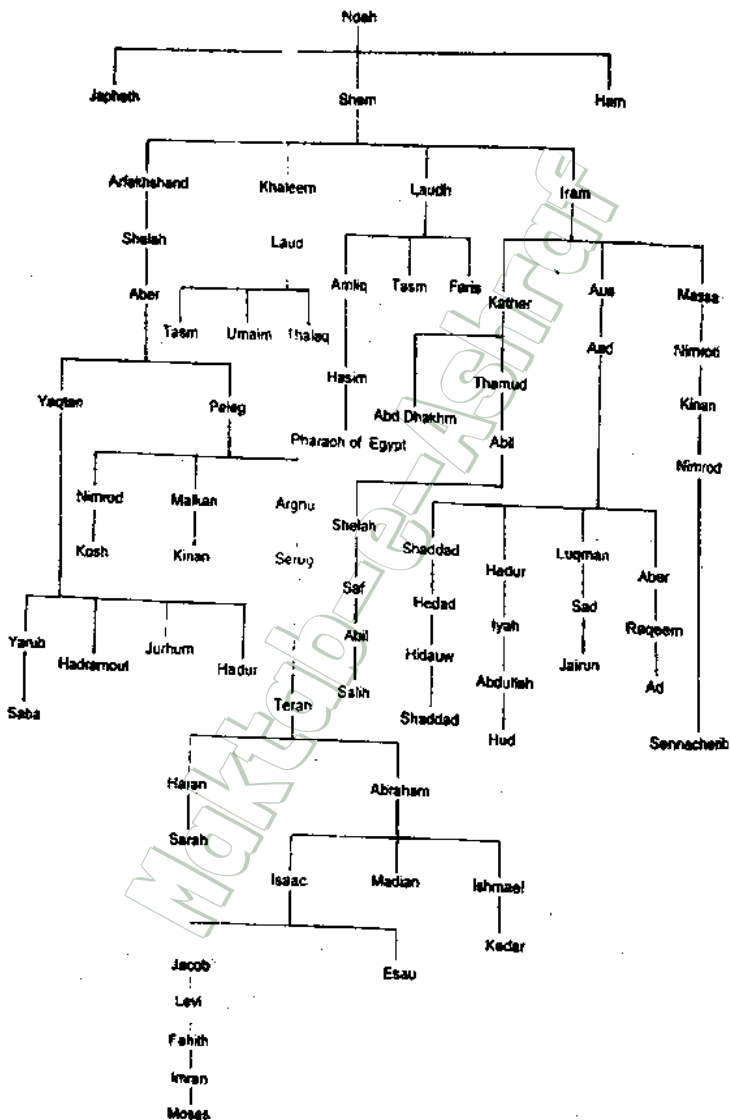
### Arab 'Āribah:

This category of Arabs is the progeny of Qahtân. Prior to Qahtân from Nûh ؑ none of these ancestors had Arabic as their language. The progeny of Qahtân used Arabic for the first time, which they amalgamated from the *Arab Bâ'idah*. The Qahtân tribes are divided in two types, Yemeniah and Sabâiyah.

Scholars are widely divided over the genealogical issue of Qahtân. Some of them say that he was the son of Aber bin Shâlikh (Shelah) bin Arfakhshand bin Sâ'm bin Nûh, and the brother of Qane and Yaqtan. Torah doesn't mention it, but Qane and Yaqtan are mentioned therein. According to others, Yaqtan is derived from Qahtân, in other words, what has been called Yaqtan is actually Qahtân. Ibn Hishâm says that Ya'rub bin Qahtân is also called Yemen and the country of Yemen was named after him. Now, if Qahtân belonged to the progeny of Ismail (Ishmael) ؑ, the whole of Arabia would be descending from Ismail ؑ for only two persons, Qahtân and Adnân are the remote ancestors of all the tribes of Arabia. But the most confirmed and acceptable understanding is that Qahtân and Yaqtân are the same person and the Qahtân tribe does not precede Banu Ismail.



# Genealogy of Banu Sām



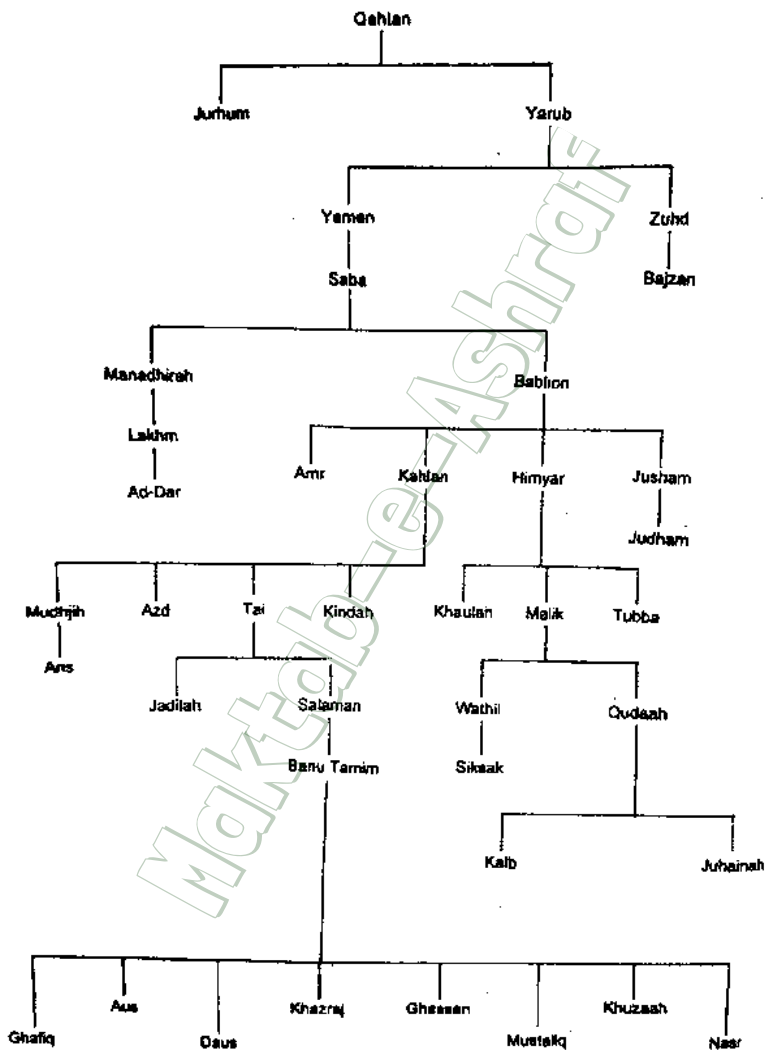
*Arab 'Aribah* or Qahtân tribes have produced some famous kings who had the whole of Arabia under their control. Ya'rub bin Qahtân did away with all the races and traces of the *Arab Bâ'idah*. A short genealogical table of Banu Qahtân may be seen on the next page.

Yemen is supposed to be origin and the ancient land of the Qahtân tribes. Among them, Himyari and Azdi tribes are most renowned. Azdi tribes ruled over the city of Saba and southern Arabia. They paid special attention to the progress and prosperity of the Yemenite population. Queen Bilqis was from them and she was a contemporary of Sulaiman (Solomon) ﷺ. The *Tâbi'iyah* kings who reigned over Yemen and Hadramout also belonged to them. One of the tribes of Azdi shifted to Al-Madinah, settled and ruled there. Khuzâ'ah turned towards Makkah and defeated the Jurhum tribe who was then in control of the affairs there. Nasr, the son of Azd settled in Tihâmah; and Imrân, a son of Khuzâ'ah settled in Oman, and their children came to be known as Azd Oman, while another one named Ghassân settled in the frontier area of Syria and ruled over the frontier tribes. In Yemen, the rule of Qahtâni sultans extended up to 7 CE. Ghassân bordered on the Roman Empire, while the Qahtâni state of Hirah was near the Persian Empire. At the time of the advent of Islam, the Qahtân tribes were very strong and in a commanding position in the whole of Arabia.

### **Arab Musta'ribah:**

This category of the Arabs refers to Banu Adnân or the progeny of Ismail (Ishmael) ﷺ. They came to Arabia from the outside, therefore they are called *Arab Musta'ribah* or the mixed Arabs. Ibrahim's mother tongue was 'Ajami or Persian. When Ibrahim (Abraham) ﷺ left Ismail (Ishmael) ﷺ in Makkah along with his mother Hâjira (Hagar), they learned Arabic from the Qahtâni tribe Jurhum, which was already settled in Makkah, and later Arabic became the mother tongue of the progeny of Ismail ﷺ. Ismail's mother passed away when he was only 15 years old. After the demise of his mother, Ismail ﷺ made up his mind to leave Makkah and to settle somewhere in Syria. But the people of the Jurhum tribe in unison requested him to change his mind.

# Genealogy of Banu Qahtan



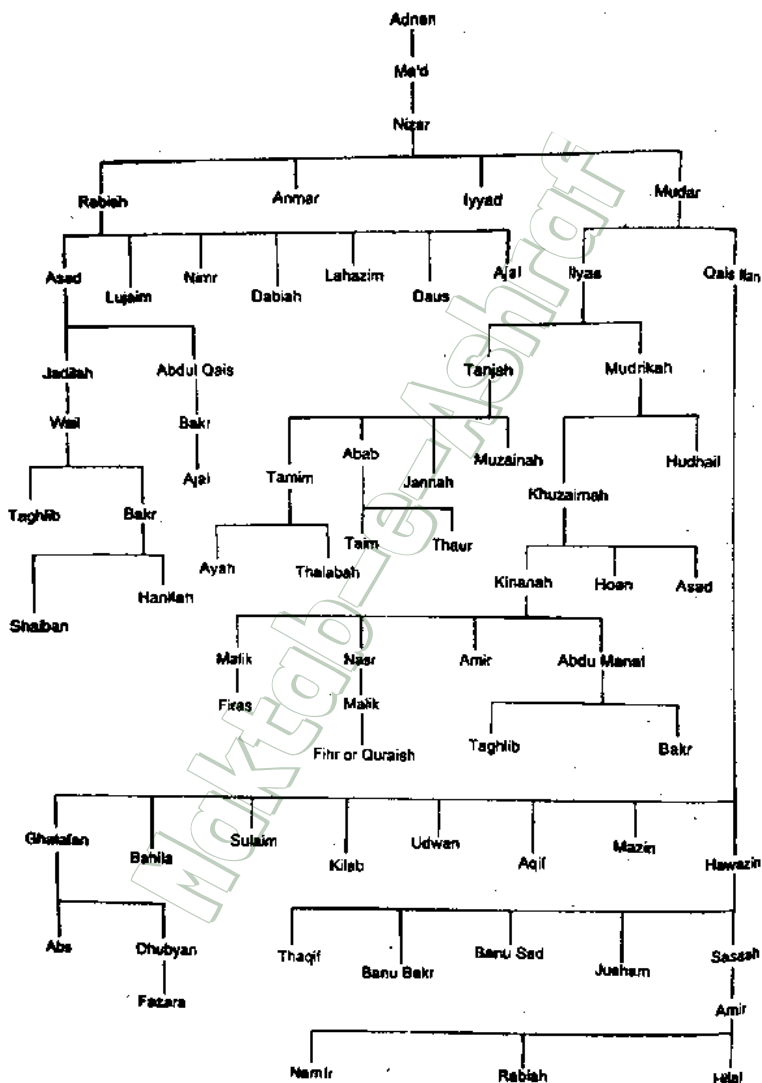
He was then married to Amārah bint Saeed bin Usāmah belonging to Amāliqah family. After a short time, Ibrahim ؑ came and Ismail divorced his wife according to the instructions of his father, and then married Syedah bint Mudād bin Amr of the Jurhum tribe. Following these events, both Ibrahim ؑ and Ismail ؑ started building the Ka'bah on the old foundations made by Adam ؑ. Ibrahim ؑ would lay the bricks while Ismail ؑ would hand him the kneaded clay and the stones while both of them were supplicating:

"Our Lord! Accept this from us. Verily, you are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower." (2:127)

When the wall of the Ka'bah was raised to such an extent that the work of construction was impeded, Ibrahim ؑ stood up on a piece of stone to resume his work. This place is called the 'Station of Ibrahim'. When the Ka'bah was near completion, Ibrahim ؑ asked Ismail ؑ to bring a special stone to be put at the base as a cornerstone so that place could be distinguished. Ismail ؑ led by Jibril ؑ brought *Hajar Aswad* (the Black Stone) from Boqabis mountain and Ibrahim ؑ put it in the selected spot. This is the same stone that is kissed during the circumambulation (*Tawāf*) of the Ka'bah. After rebuilding the Ka'bah, Ibrahim ؑ and Ismail ؑ took their followers to Mina and Arafat, sacrificed their animals and circumambulated the Ka'bah. Ibrahim ؑ later departed to Syria and continued to visit the Ka'bah every year, performing *Hajj* until the end of his life.

Ismail ؑ settled in Makkah for the rest of his life. The tribe Banu Jurhum (Jurhum the second) had already settled in Makkah and the Amāliqah tribe settled in the suburbs of Makkah. (This was not the Amāliqah tribe of Arab *Bā'idah*.) Some people from these tribes believed in Ismail ؑ while others kept to their old faith. Ismail died, according to the Torah, at the age of 137 years. He was survived by twelve sons whose descendants multiplied so much that the land of Makkah could not contain them, and so they spread all over the Hijāz. The trusteeship of Ka'bah and the leadership of Makkah remained continuously with the descendants of Ismail ؑ. Among his children was Adnān, the son of Kedar. The progeny of Adnān includes all the renowned tribes of Banu Ismail, and so the Arab *Musta'ribah* of Banu Ismail are called the people of Adnān.

# Genealogy of Banu Adnan



The son of Adnân was called Ma'd and his grandson was called Nizâr. Nizâr had four sons from whom all the Adnân tribes branched out. As a result of this all the Adnân tribes are called Ma'di or Nizâri. The genealogical table of the Adnân tribes is given on the facing page.

### **Adnân Tribes:**

Among the Adnân tribes Iyyâd, Rabi'ah and Mudar achieved fame. To the well-known tribe of Mudar, belonged the Kinânah tribe which had an eminent person named Fihir bin Mâlik who was also called Quraish. The progeny of Quraish gave birth to many tribes, among them Banu Sahn, Banu Makhzum, Banu Jumah, Banu Taim, Banu Adi, Banu Abdud-Dâr, Banu Zuhrah, and Banu Abd Manâf gained much fame. Abd Manâf had four sons namely Abd Shams, Naufal, Abdul-Muttalib and Hâshim. Among the children of Hâshim was born Muhammad   bin Abdullâh bin Abdul-Muttalib bin Hâshim who is the last Prophet and to whom belongs the entire Muslim *Ummah* (community). The aim of this book is to clarify the state and condition of his *Ummah* (community) alone.

Abd Shams' son was Umayyah whose offspring are called Banu Umayyah. When the Adnân tribes, defeated by Khuzâ'ah left Makkah, they spread over different parts of Arabia. Banu Bakr settled in Bahrain, Banu Hanifah in Yamâmah, Banu Taghlib on the banks of Euphrates, Banu Tamim in Algiers, Banu Sulaim in the suburbs of Al-Madinah, Banu Thaqif in Tâ'if, Banu Asad in the west of Kufah and Banu Kinânah in Tihâmah. Only the Quraish tribes from among the Adnân remained living in Makkah and its suburbs and they were in disarray. Qusai bin Kilâb (who was in 5th century Christian Era) united them. By uniting various Quraish tribes, he brought not only Makkah but also the entire Hijâz under his control. Thus, the trusteeship of the House of Ka'bah once again came to the Adnân tribe. Qusai did some repair work on the Ka'bah and constructed for himself a big palace of which a spacious hall was set aside for the people to assemble for consultations and serious discussions. It was named Dâr-un-Nadwah. It also served as the seat of power from where Qusai performed official business. Qusai had also advanced a proposal that during the *Hajj* days the pilgrims should be served food

for three days and all the Quraish should make contributions for that. In short, Qusai had achieved both religious and temporal power in Makkah and the Hijāz. Qusai died in 480 CE and his son Abdud-Dār became his successor.

After the death of Abdud-Dār, his grandsons and the sons of his brother Abd Manāf fell out with one another. Mediation by the influential people of Makkah brought the situation back to normal by defining each group's responsibilities such as providing water, collection of contributions and taxes, and acting as host to the pilgrims. Abdud-Dār's grandsons were entrusted with the task of military arrangements providing security for the Ka'bah and looking after Dār-un-Nadwah. After a short time Abd Manāf's son Abd Shams handed over his right to rule to his younger brother Hāshim. Hāshim was very popular among the Makkans for his trading ability, wealth and generosity. He benefited the Quraish immensely, he persuaded the Quraish to widen the scope of their trading activities, which was very profitable for them.

### **How Abdul-Muttalib was named:**

Hāshim married the daughter of the chieftain of Al-Madinah (Yathrib at that time). She gave birth to a son who was named Shaibah. While the boy was still a child, Hāshim died. His brother Muttalib became the ruler of Makkah. Hāshim's son, Shaibah was raised in Al-Madinah. When Muttalib came to know that Hāshim's son had grown up, he himself went to Al-Madinah to bring his nephew back to Makkah. When Muttalib came to Makkah along with his nephew Shaibah, the Makkans mistook him as the slave of Muttalib. Although Muttalib tried his level best to remove the misunderstanding, it proved an exercise in futility and the name stayed with him and he was thereafter called Abdul-Muttalib. Abdul-Muttalib resembled his father in regard to character, honor and renown. The power and influence of Abdul-Muttalib aroused competition until it became unbearable for Umayyah's son Harb. He challenged Abdul-Muttalib to combat. In accordance with the practices of the time, a judge was appointed who gave his judgment in favor of Abdul-Muttalib. This decision aggravated enmity between Banu Umayyah and Banu Hāshim.

During the time of Abdul-Muttalib, an army from Abyssinia headed by a chieftain called Abrahah, launched an attack on Makkah; but the army, known as the people of the *Fil* (Elephant), was completely destroyed by a natural calamity and heavenly intervention. The genealogical relations of the Quraish tribes are given in the table on the facing page.

### **Family of Abd Manāf:**

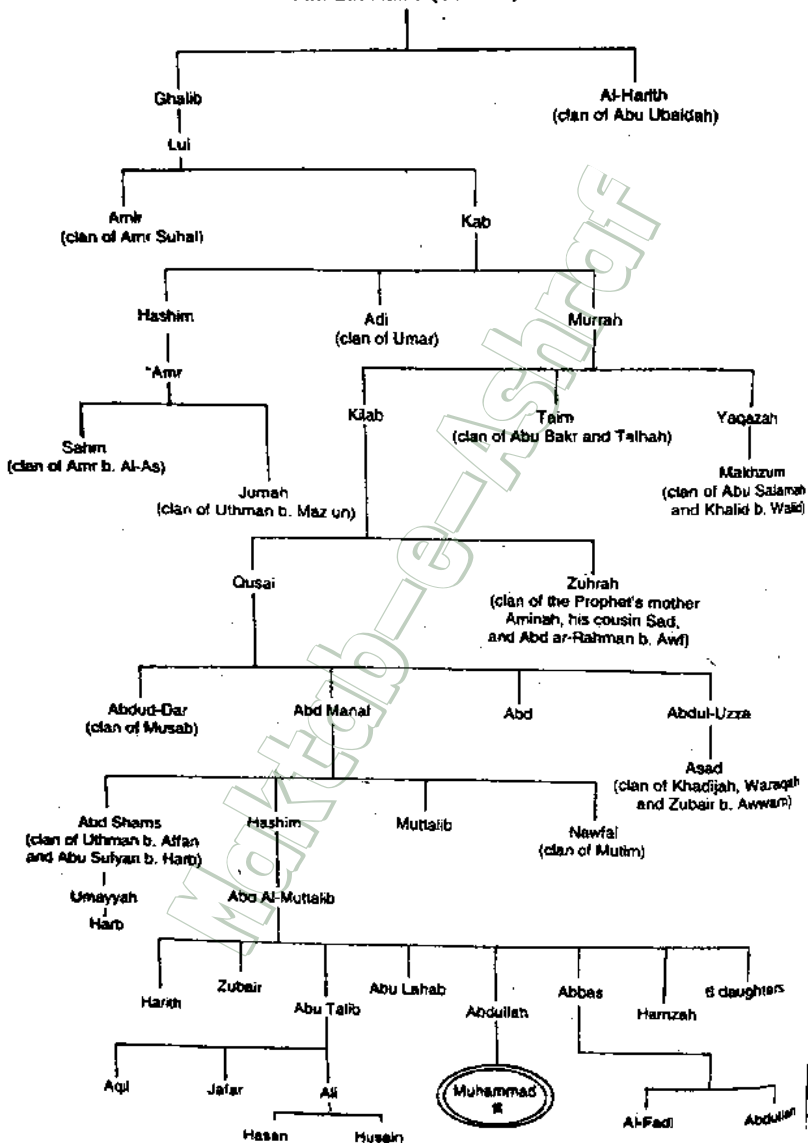
Of all the tribes, Abd Manāf was considered, in the whole of Arabia, as the most noble and respectable. After them their sons also excelled all the nobles of Arabia. The real name of Abd Manāf was Mughirah, who was also called Qamar and Syed. Since his brothers were named Abdud-Dār and Abdul-Uzza, he came to be called Abd Manāt and finally Abd Manāf.

### **Moral Condition of Arabia**

Arabia was, as mentioned in previous pages, the cradle of the Sām (Shem, son of Noah) dynasty from the days old. Since very little is known of the *Arab Bā'idah*, it cannot be definitely said what was the moral condition of the *Arab Bā'idah* as compared to contemporary nations of the world. However, it may be conjectured that in the earlier times when human population was very sparse in the inhabited quarter of the world, by and large, there would be many similarities concerning their moral standing. Before the progress and development made by Banu Ismail, and after the *Arab Bā'idah*, traces are found of many realms and kingdoms from the time of the Qahtān Arab's power throughout Arabia. But in no period of their history did any one kingdom enjoy undivided power over the entirety of Arabia. There were provinces with separate rulers, some of them more renowned than others. However, inside the country, independent homeless bands wandered aimlessly with their tents loaded on their camels. Lack of pasture, water and the necessities of life always kept the Arabs wandering and passing their days in hardship and monotony. The lack of the necessities of life caused them to neglect building a society. Their way of life showed no distinct mark or sign of change and reform.



# Fitr bin Malik (Qurash)



Life consisted of few activities and it had a uniformity of events that gave them a great deal of leisure time. A large number of vast deserts, the absence of production and indigenous things of value and the dearth of populated lands and cities never interested any foreign power to turn towards Arabia with expansionist ideas, nor were there any means or reasons to attract tourists and traders to the peninsula. Thus the people of Arabia were generally unaware of the progress and development of other nations of the world and their society, character and way of living. No foreign nation even exercised its influence on the Arabs.

### **Assertions of Dignity**

Under these circumstances and in such an environment only two traits of character easily developed in the people of Arabia. One, the development of the art of poetry for which they had a great deal of leisure time at their disposal, passing nights in the open desert and they were free of any disciplined stream of thought. Both of these states served as great stimuli. Second, the tremendous effort to survive and the subjection to a life of hardship made them extremely fond of fighting and tests of strength. Constant mutual combat led them naturally to self-praise and a growing discretion for exhibiting a sense of dignity.

Pride and boasting, two typical qualities of man, led to bravery and generosity defining distinct roles which they followed with great interest. Idleness and deep indulgence in poetic composition turned them to lovemaking and drinking. But bravery and boldness had made them hospitable to a high degree and firm in fulfilling their promise as a matter of honor. Gambling, archery, assemblies for the recital of poetic verses, assertions of dignity, and competitions were some of the means of passing their time. In short, Arabia and its climate conditioned the Arab character.

Hud ﷺ and Saleh ﷺ and several other Prophets were sent to the Arab *Bā'idah*. But the disrespect and disobedience shown to these Prophets resulted in their utter and total destruction. Some Prophets were also sent to another sections of the Arabs, the *Qahtān* Arabs, but they paid very little attention to their call with the result that they met

their doom time and again. Moreover, they could not profit substantially from the teachings of their Prophets on account of their rebellious attitude and undisciplined thinking. Some of the people of Arabia believed in Ibrahim عليه السلام and Ismail عليه السلام. In the sphere of faith and religion, their genealogical pride and egotism and the glorification of their ancestors led them to hero worship which ultimately paved the way to carving idols in their names to be worshipped. Idol worship led them to superstitions and many other irrational ideas.

When the Qahtân tribes were on the decline and Banu Ismail (the Adnân tribes) had gained ground, the invasion of Makkah by the Khuzâ'ah tribe resulted in the defeat of the Jurhum tribe. The integrity of the Adnân tribes was violated by this defeat and it injured the power and dignity of the emerging Banu Ismail in the Hijâz. It resulted in a fierce rivalry between the Adnân and Qahtân tribes, which gave birth to small clans which were unable to transform themselves into a united rule of significant importance.

The larger domains were not much better than anarchy, no Arabian king and his system of rule over his subjects was as remarkable for law and order as that of the ordinary feudal system used in Persia. This anarchy and unbridled freedom gave rise to untold immorality, misbehavior and disrespectful rudeness which permeated the whole social life of the Arabs and this human depravity continued until the light of Islam rose from the dark horizon of this country.

Most of the Arabs were nomads, and very few had settled permanently in townships and populated areas. The Arabs were very fond of keeping an exact genealogy of their ancestors preserved by memory. They would mention the names and deeds of their forefathers with pride and thus animate zeal and the valor of their people during fighting.

Perhaps it was the impact of the climatic conditions of the country or their fondness for genealogy that caused the Arabs to have a very strong memory. It was something simple for them to keep in memory accurately odes of tribute that were several hundred verses long, after hearing them only once. Their art of poetry and command of language

led them to such a state of development that they named all the non-Arabs as 'Ajam (literally: mute). If an individual of one clan was killed by that of another, the clan belonging to the dead person would not rest until they took revenge. To be at rest without an act of retaliation was a matter of utter shame and disgrace for them. Reverence for the Ka'bah and performing *Hajj* was a sign of power for all the Arabs through all their generations. Helping the helpless and the oppressed and keeping firm against the oppressors were qualities appreciated by one and all. Timidity and miserliness were taken as the greatest defects and the worst flaw of character.

### **Months of Peace**

They fixed one or several months of the year when they considered fighting as unlawful. During this span of peace and order all fighting was suspended. And during those specific days they would visit the Ka'bah and perform the *Hajj*. It was during these days that large commercial fairs were held with poetic recitals and they offered great opportunities for making new trading contacts. Some other traits of the Arabs are also worthy of notice.

### **Faith and Religion**

Before the appearance of Islam, the Arabs were passing through a state where some of their tribes acknowledged neither the Creator nor reward and punishment, while others were convinced of the existence of the Creator but not of reward and punishment and the Day of Judgment. Mostly they worshipped idols and stars; some of them worshipped fire also.

They had transformed the Ka'bah into a center of idolatry and kept 360 idols inside the Ka'bah. Jews had also come from Syria to settle in Al-Madinah (Yathrib at that time) and in its suburbs. They began to arrive there from a short time after the death of Musa عليه السلام. Among those Jews, Banu Quraizah, Banu Nadir, and Banu Qanuqâ' were the most renown. Some Christians also settled in the Ghassân and Najrân area and some people of Quzâ'ah tribe had also converted to Christianity.

## Idolatry:

Idolatry was openly practiced all over Arabia. Four hundred years before the advent of Muhammad ﷺ in era of King Shâpur of Persia, Amr bin Luhai bin Hârithah bin Imrâ'-ul-Qais bin Tha'labah bin Mazin bin Azd bin Kahlân bin Babilion bin Saba, the King of Hijâz was the first to install the idol named Hubal at the top of the Ka'bah and placed two idols Isâf and Nâilah at the well of Zamzam and persuaded the people to worship them. This Amr bin Luhai had totally rejected the concept of the Day of Judgment.

Yaguth, Ya'ûq, Nasr, Wadd and Suwâ' were adopted by different tribes for each of them had its separate idol. Wadd was carved in the shape of man while Nâilah and Suwâ' were in the form of a woman. Yaguth had the shape of a lion, Ya'ûq of horse, and Nasr of vulture. Some tribes shared idols, Tasm and Jadaïs had a common idol. The Kalb tribe worshipped Wadd whose center was Dumat-ul-Jandal. Banu Tamim adored Taim. Suwâ' was worshipped by the Hudhail, Mudhij and the Yemenite tribes worshipped Yaguth. Dhil-Kalâ' worshipped Nasr at Himyar, the Hamdân worshipped Ya'ûq, Banu Mughith of Banu Thaqif tribe served as the guards of Lât at Tâ'if, the Quraish and Banu Kinânah worshipped Uzza while Banu Shaibah were the caretakers of Uzza. Manât was adored by the Aus and Khazraj tribes, Jehar by Banu Hawâzin, Awâl by the Bakr and Taghlib, Muharraaq by Banu Bakr bin Wâil, Sa'd by Banu Malkân, Sa'eer by Banu Antarah, Amyanas by Banu Khaulân, Raza by Banu Tai, and Dhul-Kaffain by the Daus. Besides the idols mentioned, many idols like Jarish, Shâriq, A'im, Madân, Auf, and Manâf were very famous and every one of them was the deity of one tribe or another. Whenever any congregation of idolaters was organized, and if an Arab was not able to attend it during the fixed days, he would fix a stone called *Duwâir* and go around it like the Ka'bah to compensate for missing the congregation.

In Arabia, there were other centers of idolatry besides the Ka'bah. Ghatfân had constructed a house similar to the Ka'bah and called it Qalis and they even performed *Hajj* there. Banu Khath'am had also built a house calling it Dhul-Khalasah to perform *Hajj* there. Dhul-

Ka'bât was the center for worship of the Rabi'ah. There was a tribal temple in Najrân also which was built with three hundred skins and was called the Ka'bah of Najrân. The idolaters of Arabia would visit it as they did with the Ka'bah. Moreover, they had also built a *Haram* (sanctuary) around it where even a murderer or assassin was safe. On the top of the Ka'bah there was another idol called Shams. Pictures of Ibrahim, Ismail, Isa (Jesus) and Maryam (Mary) عليهم السلام were also worshipped in the Ka'bah.

### Sacrifice:

The idolaters, when coming to perform *Hajj*, brought camels for sacrificing and offering to their idols. They had a practice to suspend shoes from the necks of the camels and marked them to signify them as sacrificial animals. Nobody would then get in the way of the animals. Moreover, the calves of the camels and sheep and other animals were sacrificed to the idols. Some of the tribes even sacrificed humans to the idols. According to some historians, the idolaters of Arabia believed in the Oneness of God and acknowledged Him as One. They worshipped idols because they believed that they will intercede with Allâh for them. Some of the tribes entertained the belief that the person on whose grave a she-camel was sacrificed, will on the Day of Judgment, rise from his grave mounted on his she-camel. This belief indicates that they believed in Day of Resurrection and some form of Judgment.

### Star-Worshipping:

When the Arabs were still in ignorance, worshipping stars was very common. Historians have no substantial proof if Arabia, Egypt, Greece or Persia were the first to institute the worship of stars or if they came to it separately. However, it is hard to imagine that worshipping stars came to Arabia from outside. The sun was worshipped by Himyar tribe, the moon by the Kinânah, Dahrân by Tamim, Jupiter by the Lakhm and Judhâm, Suhail by the Tai, Shera by the Qais and Mercury by the Asad. Most of the tribal idols were named with the names of stars. Stone idols and noted stars were worshipped commonly by different tribes. They often based their important affairs on the rising and setting of certain stars.

It is not surprising that the people passing their days and nights in open fields and deserts had their attention focused on the stars and planets and acknowledging some of them as their deities. From *Sūrat Nuh* of the Qur'ān it comes to light that even during the era of Nuh عليه السلام, Iraqi Arabs worshipped Yaguth, Ya'uq, Wadd, Nasr, and Suwā', which are all named after stars. It makes it very clear that star worship in Arabia was a very old affair. The moon was worshipped more than any other object.

### **Soothsaying:**

Soothsayers were found in large number in Arabia. A *Kāhin* was one who claimed to have information about the unseen events of the past while, those giving information of the future were called *Arrāf*. Both men and women claimed knowledge of the unseen. Among the soothsayers of Arabia Af'a, Jadhimah, Abrash, Shaq and Satih were well-known. Another kind of soothsayer was known as *Nāzir*, they could tell about the unseen by focusing their eyes on a mirror or on a tray of water. They included casters of pebbles and the pits of fruit. They all belonged to the same category but they were ranked below the soothsayers, while those making amulets were considered the lowest.

### **Omens:**

The Arabs also believed in good and bad omens. They held crows to be very inauspicious and something that causes separation. Since the crow is called *Ghurāb* in Arabic, they called travelling as *Ghurbat*, and the traveler as *Gharīb*, as according to them, the influence of a crow causes separation and causes man to suffer the hardships of travelling. And owl was also very unlucky to them for its hooting cries, they believed caused death and destruction. Sneezing also carried an ill omen to them. Some of them were sorcerers and they dealt in sorcery and performed heavy exercises to befriend Satan.

### **Fighting**

Fighting would break out over petty matters and insignificant incidents. Once hostilities began they could linger on for several generations and even centuries. Most of their fighting started without

any substantial reason. There were more than one hundred feuds during the Days of Ignorance in Arabia that were famous, for instance, Bu'āth, Kilab, Fatrat, Nakhkiah, Qarn, Subān and Hātib were the names of well-known feuds.

No tribe ever benefited from these feuds; they only suffered destruction and the loss of life and property. They had an old practice of putting to death the women and children of the defeated enemy after taking them prisoner. However, if a person had eaten from their food or had received hospitality from them previously, they were safe from being killed. They would shave the heads of those whom they released.

Most disputes would be settled by a challenge to single combat. They took special care of their horses and weapons. The battle array of armies was not in practice. Anyone achieving perfection in swordmanship, archery, cavalry, or fighting with lances was held in high esteem and his name and reputation would quickly spread far and wide. Some particular tribes gained distinction in the use of some particular weapon. They had special names for weapons, swords, bows and horses, which were famous throughout the land. For instance, the name of the sword of Harth bin Abu Shimr Ghassāni was Khudhum, while the sword of Abdul-Muttalib bin Hāshim was called Atshān and that of Mālik bin Zubair was Dhun-Nun. These evidences let us know that the people of Arabia had a great zest for fighting and killing. This is the reason behind thousands of names given to horses and swords in Arabic.

## **Illicit Sex**

Arabs in the Age of Ignorance had no custom of observing *Hijāb* (covering of women) and their women would come freely before strange men. The lack of the necessities of life and other time-consuming affairs, an irresponsible sense of freedom, over indulgence in poetic composition, their assertion of pride and superiority, and the hot climate of the country was enough to instigate this tendency. Anyone who never fell in love with a strange woman was disrespected. Some tribes were renowned for their love making. Banu Adhrah's love gained so much celebrity and renown that it became proverbial:



أشقى من بنى عذرة

That is, so-and-so is a lover greater than Banu Adhrah. Someone asked a bedouin which tribe did he belong to? He replied that he was from a tribe that when they fall in love they pass away. A girl heard it and remarked: "By the Lord of Ka'bah, you are from Banu Adhrah."

## **Poetry**

During the Age of Ignorance in Arabia everyone participated in the art of poetry. Men, women, children, old and young, all were poets of higher or lower degree. They were born with poetry and eloquence. Their poetic exercises generally were impromptu. They needed no thinking or reflecting and never needed to search for topics. They were so proud of their eloquence and command of language that they considered all the non-Arabs as unable to speak. But the Qur'ân shattered the arrogance of their eloquence and rhetoric into pieces and they had to bow down before the glory of the Book of Allâh.

The one whose ode of tribute was acknowledged as the best in a poetic congregation on the occasion of fairs, special functions and *Hajj*, was immediately accepted as the best among them in position and stature. To them poets were equal to brave commanders and kings or even greater than them in status. In fact, it was an easy job for the poets to cause tribes to fight against one another, to make tribes extraordinarily brave, to keep the fighting going or to put an end to it. The best odes of tribute were hung over the walls of the Ka'bah. Thus seven such odes of tribute known as the Seven Golden Odes, which were written by Imra'ul Qais bin Hizr Kindi, Zuhair bin Abu Salma Muzani, Labid bin Rabi'ah, Amr bin Kulthum and Antarah Absi.

## **Passion for Hunting**

During the Age of Ignorance, the Arabs had a great enthusiasm for hunting and so there are a great number of terms in Arabic for hunting activities. The game which moves from right to left was called *Sâneh*, while the one going from left to right was called *Bâreh*. The game coming from the front was called *Nâteh* and the one from behind was *Qa'eed*. The hunter's ambush was named *Qarrah*. *Zabiah* was the

name given to the ditch dug for hunting a lion. They gave the name *Talabbud* to the state of the hunter when he crawled on his stomach sticking close to the earth, and the state of going out to hunt and coming back without hunting was called *lkhfāq*. On hunting an animal they ate its meat without any sense of its being permitted or prohibited. Islam brought about the limitation of lawful and unlawful and imposed certain restrictions on hunting.

## **Food and Clothes**

Arabia produces neither silk nor cotton. Some regions produce them in such a meager quantity that is quite insufficient for the needs of the people. Yemen has been noted for its cloth from ancient times. The Arabs generally had very simple clothes to wear. Wearing coarse clothes with leather patches was customary. Some people would make a sheet by joining small leather patches held together by pins, and such a sheet or mantle served the purpose of wrapping and spreading. Garments were also woven from camel and sheep hair, and those pieces of cloth were also used for making tents and for bedding and carpeting. Loose low hanging colorless shirts, waist sheets and turbans or scarves on the head were standard dress. They knew about aloeswood, ambergris, and incense. Their food was also very simple and unceremonious. They could be content with unpalatable food with a bad taste. Meat and flesh happened to be very tasty and valuable things to them. Milk and meat were most common. Cheese, battered barley grain, dates, olive oil, and *Harirah* were their common items. Sieving of flour was not a common practice; they rather baked bread with unsieved flour. They had no proper etiquette of dining. This can be assessed from the dos and don'ts prescribed by the Prophet ﷺ for eating and drinking in *Ahadith* which forbid many kinds of misbehavior like gluttony, shamelessness, unclean habits and nonsensical talk while eating.

## **Plunder**

As mentioned previously, Arabia had two types of people, one settled in cities and settlements and another living a nomadic life, the latter were larger in number. Although the citizens carried some qualities

like rights of neighbors, trusteeship and honesty, but the defects of deceit, cheating and conniving in trade and business were plentiful. They were expert in raiding and highway robbery of the nomadic type. Almost all were addicted to looting the travelers and snatching away goods by force. On finding someone making a journey alone, they covered and hid the wells which were on the way with grass and other things so that the traveler would die of thirst and they would take his goods. Some of them were proverbially expert in committing theft. These thieves were called *Dhubân-ul-Arab* (wolves of Arabia).

### **Conceit**

Conceit had touched its peak during Arabian Ignorance. Jadhimah Abrash was so haughty that he never appointed any one as an adviser to consult with. He would say that *Farqadain* (the two brilliant stars near the Polestar) were his companions. Many other tribes were well known for these base qualities and none of the tribes were free from this conceit. As a result of this, they never listened to the good counsel and preaching of the Prophets and religious guides for obedience was a trait shameful to them.

### **Unending Malice**

In case they failed to take revenge on their enemy or assassin during his lifetime, they made his sons and grandsons the target of their revenge and they passed their days in discontentment until they took out their vengeance on their enemies. They would take revenge even if the reason behind it had been forgotten. They would be intent to kill someone out of enmity without even telling anyone what was the cause of the hostility.

### **Mourning the Dead**

Upon the death of someone, his relatives would tear at their faces and hair and cry in pain. Women would follow the funeral with their hair untied and head dusted. Like the Hindus in India shaving their head and beard out of sorrow for the dead, in Arabia during the Days of Ignorance,

women would shave their heads. Women were also called for lamenting which they did at the top of their voices; after the burial, these women were served food.

### **Superstition and Credulity**

They believed in the existence of jinns, demons and fairies. They also believed that fairies could fall in love with human males, and jinn could form physical contacts with human females. Although they considered jinn as invisible creature, they believed that the union of the material and immaterial could bear babies. The Arabs believed that Jurhum was born as a result of union between a human and an angel. This was their belief also about the Queen Bilqis of Saba (Queen of Sheba). About Umar bin Yabru they thought that he was born with the union of a human and a fairy.

The she-camel bearing five calves and the fifth being a male, was called *Bahirah* and they left it free by piercing its ears. She was at liberty to go and graze anywhere and nobody objected to it. In case any sheep bore a male, it was offered to the idols; and if it happened to be female, they kept it for themselves. In case of a male and female, they held back from sacrificing them and called them *Wasilah*. The male camel that had fathered ten calves was held in great honor. They neither loaded it nor made it a mount and left it free like a bull. It was called *Hâm*.

They used to keep three arrows before the idols or at the threshold of the temples. They wrote *La* (no) on one arrow and *Na'm* (yes) on another. The third would be blank. In case of any problem they would take out one arrow from the quiver. If the arrow with *La* written on it came out, they dropped the plan of doing what they wanted, and if the arrow showing *Na'm* was picked, they thought themselves permitted to do whatever they had planned. If the blank arrow came out, they continued the exercise until the arrow with either *La* or *Na'm* came out. While setting out on a journey they would tie a knot on a thin branch of a certain type of tree called *Ratm*. On coming back they would notice whether the knot was intact or untied. If they found the knot untied, they believed that their wives must have committed adultery while they were away. At the death of a person, his she-

camel was fastened to his grave with her eyes closed until she died there or the head of the she-camel was pulled towards her breast and tied to it, and they would left her until she died. It was done in accordance with the belief that the dead person, when raised from his grave, would find the she-camel and have it as his mount. They believed that if a person went to a settlement and was afraid of an epidemic there, he would be saved if he cried loudly like an ass standing at the gate of the settlement. When the number of camels in one's possession would reach more than one thousand, he would take out both the eyes of the bull among them to save all the other camels from calamity. When a camel would develop mange, the healthy one, instead of the sick, was branded with the belief that the sick one would restore its health. The famous poet Nâbighah says in his couplet:

"You left the stranger and loaded his burden upon me, as they leave the camel suffering from mange and brand the healthy camel grazing peacefully instead."

Similarly, they would beat the ox if a cow refused to drink water. They believed that the ox was possessed by a jinn who would stop the cows from drinking water. They believed that if the killer of someone went unpunished, a bird named *Hamah* would come out of the skull of the dead person and would go on crying: "Give me water, give me water," until the crime was avenged. They believed that some person had a snake in his stomach and when it was hungry it would tear and eat away the flesh from the ribs of the person. They had a belief that if the children of a woman kept dying, they could be saved from dying if the woman concerned trampled the dead body of a noble and wealthy person with her feet. They also believed that the jinn feared rabbits and so they suspended rabbit bones from the neck of their children to keep them safe from the ill effect of the jinn.

### **Killing of Daughters**

The custom of killing their daughters was rampant among the Banu Tamim and the Quraish. They took pride in killing their daughters and it was for them a status symbol. This heartlessness reached such a height in some tribes that when the daughter became five or six years

old and start uttering sweet words, the stone-hearted father would take her in beautiful garments to a place outside his settlement where he had already dug a deep ditch. He would then make his daughter stand beside the ditch and then push her into the ditch stoning her to death while she called for her father's help. No screaming and crying could melt his heart and he would return after filling the ditch. They took pride in burying their daughters alive. Qais bin Âsim, a man from Banu Tamim, buried his ten daughters alive in this manner. Although no tribe of Arabia was free from this inhuman custom, some tribes did it more than others.

### **Gambling**

The Arabs were very fond of gambling too. They gambled with arrows which had no feathers. They were ten in number, and their names in order were: (1) *Ghadh*, (2) *Tawam*, (3) *Raqib*, (4) *Nâfis*, (5) *Hals*, (6) *Mabal*, (7) *Mualla*, (8) *Fasih*, (9) *Manih* and (10) *Waghd*. Each of them had its own share, for instance, *Ghadh* had one, *Tawâm* had two, and *Raqib* had three, and it kept increasing in this way till *Mualla* had seven shares, while the last three arrows had no share. Ten wealthy persons would buy fat goats and divide them into twenty-eight shares. The arrows would be handed to a designated person who would take out and give each person an arrow one by one, and each person got his share according to his arrow's share. They played such games of chance before Hubal at the Ka'bah. Another form of gambling was that they collected some sand and hid something in it. Then after dividing the sand into two heaps they asked the players to tell in which heap was the hidden object. The one who guessed it correctly was declared the winner and those guessing incorrectly were declared as the losers.

### **Arabian Ignorance and Other Countries**

What has been described in the previous sections refers to the condition of Arabia and its people before the appearance of Islam and the advent of the Prophet ﷺ. What has been stated regarding character, habits, living, religion, and beliefs reflects the conditions from one century before the era of the last Prophet ﷺ and remained

unchanged until he was declared a Prophet. The reader can ponder over what kind of environment the Prophet ﷺ was sent to and how depraved were the people when Islam came to them. The following pages will give a picture of the magnificent revolution brought about by the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ and the impact of Islam as a force. This assessment may be correctly made when we cast a glance at the overall situation prevailing in the world and to see how Islam brought about change in the existing situation. It is appropriate at this time after assessing the situation in Arabia to take a look at what condition the world contemporary to that time was experiencing.

### **Persia (Iran)**

Persia was reckoned among the most renowned, ancient and venerable civilizations. During the ancient times the people worshipped the moon, and a large number of religious guides came on the scene one after another to reform the situation. Before the end of this period Zoroaster gave currency to the fire worship. [The religion of Zoroaster was free from fire worship and proclaimed oneness of God but fire worship took over this religion later on.] He offered himself as a true guide and very soon it became the state religion and that of its subjects.

The Persians, possibly surpassed all other countries in terms of progress and development. During the height of its greatness and glory, Persian rule had stretched from Egypt to Mongolia and from the Himalayan range and Persian Gulf to the Altai Mountains. Persian society ruled over the whole of the Asian continent and their culture, civilization and ethical standards were considered worth following in every Asian country. At the time of the appearance of Islam, they had become so low and depraved that they had lost most of their good qualities after falling into the dark quagmire of polytheism. They had given Zoroaster divine attributes and enlisted him among their false deities. The creators of good and evil were worshipped in the name of *Yazdân* (Ahura Mazda—god of goodness) and *Ahriman* (Angra Mainyu—god of evil and darkness). They worshipped fire and light openly and fervently. The worship of the moon, the sun, the stars and the planets was also in vogue. Theft and highway robbery were

rampant. Adultery was so much in force that the wicked Mazdak asked for a liaison with the Princess of Kisra (Chosroes) openly in the court and the ruler of Persia did not think it necessary to oppose this most unreasonable and immodest demand. Mutual dissension and bestiality, malice and enmity, cheating and deceit, treating the weak by the strong more disgracefully than even the animals were some of the defects that had sent Persia to the lowest level of depravity and degradation. Persia was bereft of all ethical and human qualities, and the country that was once the center of culture and civilization was groping in the dark. Not only that worship of stars, fire and heroes was their custom, the kings, ministers, commanders and nobles also made the people worship them. The Persian subject rose to freedom from this torment and the darkness was dispelled only when the Muslims marched into the Persian territories and brought it under their control.

### **Greece and Rome**

Another great power and rival of Persia was the Roman Empire. Greek and Roman civilizations were also very ancient and magnificent and their arts and sciences and grandeur and glory had been universally known. No country of the world could surpass Greece in the spheres of medicine, mathematics, astronomy, logic, and philosophy. This country had produced Socrates, Hippocrates, Luqmân, Plato, and Aristotle. It was in this country that a conqueror and king like Alexander was born. The Roman Caesar whose capital was Constantinople, was not only an emperor but considered also a religious guide. But, despite all these material and scientific developments, both Greece and Rome had, during the sixth and seventh centuries, become steeped in such degradation and depravity that the darkness prevailing in Persia was in no way deeper than in Greece and Rome. As every indebted person in Persia would sell himself like a slave, Greece too had several kinds of slaves. One kind of slave could not be sold outside Greece, but all other kinds of slaves were sold in foreign lands like horses, oxen, camels, and goats. Any master had the right to kill his slave as anybody has the right to slaughter his animal. Parents would sell their children and make them slave of others. In Greece and Rome, slaves had no right to marry and there was no legal relation between the slaves and their children.





## **Depravity of the Christians**

For the first two hundred years after the birth of Isa (Jesus) ﷺ, there was no trace of a monk among the Christians. But during the sixth century, the number of monks rose to such an extent in Syria, Greece and Rome that anybody desirous of being held in high esteem became a monk. Gradually this custom prevailed among the womenfolk with the result that monasteries became centers of all kinds of shameful acts. Some monks lived in deserts.

Respect of women and parents had no place in their lives. Theft, adultery and cheating were most common. Begging was not a matter of shame which was in fact the logical result of being a monk. The concept of the oneness of God and divine worship was virtually lost. Certificates of deliverance could be had from the monks and religious guides by pleasing them through services. The rich considered it their legal right to have the poor serve them. Kings and commanders treated their subjects like animals and took control of the efforts of their labor and left them very little to live on.

## **Egypt**

To assess the ancient position of Egypt and its social greatness, the mammoth construction of the Sphinx, the Egyptian pyramids and objects and articles recovered from the many excavations in recent times have a lot to tell about the glory and grandeur of ancient Egyptian society. Since Egypt is an agricultural country, it became the target of successive foreign attacks when it had grown weak. Persians, Greeks and Romans invaded it time and again and kept it under their control for long periods. It is a matter of conjecture that the society and civilization of the invaders favorably influenced the Egyptians.

Christianity was followed by a large section of the Egyptians during the reign of Romans. But, before the advent of Islam in Egypt, it was a country immersed in darkness and depravity. Christianity in Egypt was in no better position than pure idolatry. All the defects that had been part of Egyptian idolatry could be found among the Christians. The Romans and the Greeks who were known as ruling nations

treated their subjects more disgracefully than even their animals. The defects found among the Greeks and the Romans took their worst forms among the Egyptians. Slavery was rife in the most wretched form. Alluring principles and rules were instituted for committing adultery and pillage. Human killings served as a source of entertainment. Women were encouraged to commit suicide. In short, the darkness prevailing in Egypt was not less than that of anywhere else. Egypt was replete with all the forms of degradation that could be thought of.

## **India**

Great Maharajahs like Asoka, Chandra Gupta and Vikarmajeet had already passed away. Indians were particularly proud of their astronomy, mathematics and philosophy. They also retained the tales of founders of religions like Krishn, Ramchandra and Gautama, and the epics of Mahabharata and Ramayana. But the era we are referring to here is one when Buddhism was declining and making a way for Brahmanism. No province of the country had a magnificent leader. Idolatry was rampant in the entire country. Idol worship was considered as the only means of deliverance both in Buddhism and Brahmanism. In most cases, idols of Brahmans and Buddhas were kept side by side in the same temple and were worshipped with great fervor.

A Chinese traveler writes that no household was free from idols. The immodest and impure ways of Bam-Marga had achieved popularity all over the country. They had also instituted, like the Egyptians, rules and principles for committing adultery, which were essentially made a part of their religious rites. The Rajahs of Sindh set the example of marrying their own sisters. When Rajahs and rulers had reduced themselves to such human degradation, it is not surprising that their subjects followed them in meanness of character. Some books written in that period that are now available as part of the Hindu scriptures and religious books, bring to light the utter degradation of their style of living. Worship of stars, planets, mountains, rivers, trees, animals, snakes, stones and human genitals was rife in India. One can easily infer from this the depth of terrible darkness prevailing in India at that time.

## **China**

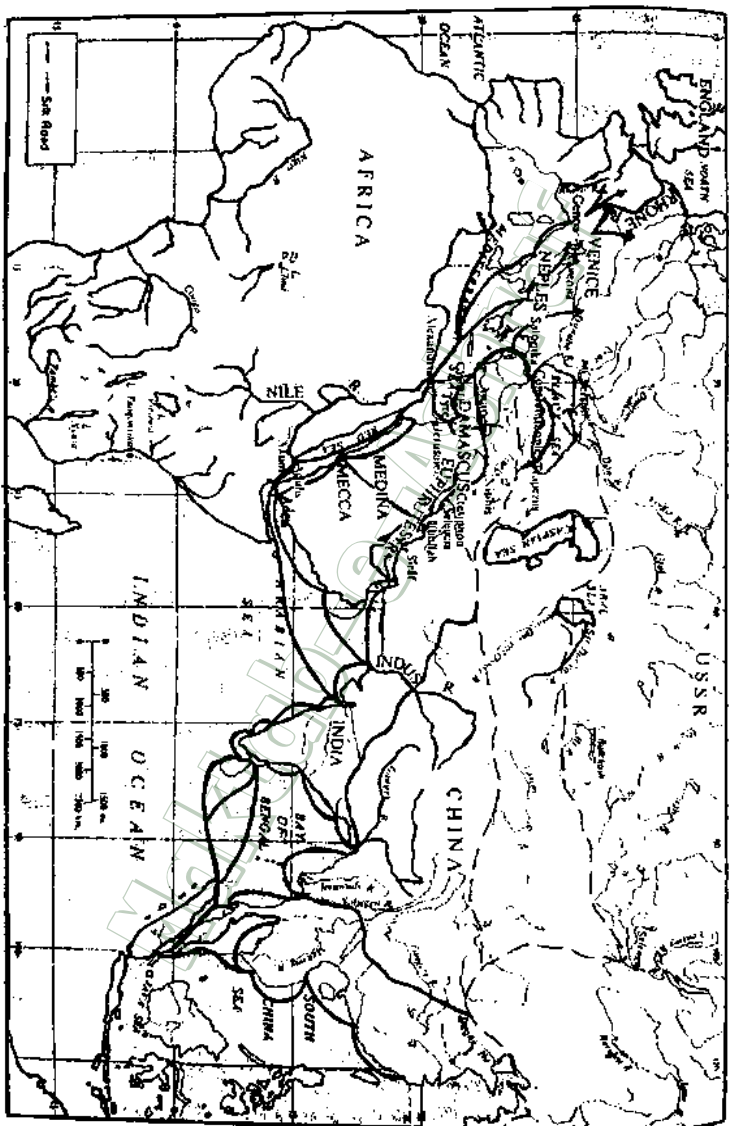
The countries mentioned above lie around Arabia and these alone are taken as civilized. Only China may be added to this list. China was worse than all the others. The mixture of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism had made a mess of the cultural and moral condition of China. However, peace returned to China only when a band of Muslims settled in China and impressed their neighbors with their high moral examples. Human populations existed in Turkistan, Russia, and Europe too but either they were unknown to the rest of the world or they could hardly be called humans and they possessed no enviable qualities.

## **Conclusion**

From the states and conditions observed above, it can be easily understood that, before or at the time of Muhammad ﷺ being commissioned as Prophet, the entire world had steeped in darkness. A state of ignorance had overtaken the entire inhabited part of the earth in a manner that not even a twinkling light of hope and guidance was visible. Never before had such a state come to pass when civilization, society, morality, knowledge, wisdom, and knowledge of Allāh had perished everywhere at the same time.

The whole inhabited earth had been sent the guidance of Allāh the Almighty, which kept coming to every country, and the sight of light and darkness continued appearing alternately like days and nights until night spread over the whole world. The time was right for the Prophet of Truth to be sent to all the countries of the world. Allāh the Almighty put to an end the teachings brought by the former Prophets. He brought to the surface the dire need for a new guide and leader for every part of the world. Thus the sad plight of the mankind was thirsting for a new guide. Allāh the Almighty chose Arabia to be the place of Prophethood and the birthplace of His Perfect Messenger and Guide. Thus the sun of Prophethood rose from Makkah to dispel darkness from the inhabited parts of the earth and illuminated the whole world with its bright rays.

Trade routes of the seventh and eighth centuries CE



This book is inspired by this same rising sun. But, before coming to this point, the answer to the question why Arabia was chosen for the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ demands answers. Why was he not sent to any other country?

### **The Choice of Arabia**

The most reasonable and definite answer to this question is that the last Prophet had, after all, to be born in any one particular country and so the question arises in every case. So, the question becomes meaningless.

Another answer to the question is that all the well-known countries had at one time attained progress and development and achieved distinction in the sphere of civilization, society, ethics and science. Moreover, every country had tasted victory and defeat in due course. No language of any other country of the world had achieved such perfection as Arabic, which had surpassed other languages in the power of expression.

If the Prophet ﷺ had been sent to any country other than Arabia, the message of the last Prophet ﷺ would have encountered complications due to the past and the previous history of victories and defeats and possession of or possession by the chosen country. There was also the risk of his message losing its power and grace and a part thereof might have been attributed to ancient traditions of the chosen country. The magnificent task of redressing civilization, character and spiritual values could not have been accomplished and all his endeavors would be lost in the ancient customs and traditions of the country concerned.

Moreover, any complete book of guidance is in need of a language superior to all others in power of expression, and no language was more appropriate than Arabic to bear the heavy spiritual and intellectual burden of Revelation. So, by any logic and reason, the last Prophet ﷺ must have honored Arabia as his birth place.

The people of Arabia neither became subject of any foreign power nor captured and ruled over any other country. Thus, to the Arabs, every

nation or every country was alike. When they came out with Islam, all the civilized countries and nations from Spain on the eastern coast of Atlantic Ocean to China on the western coast of Chinese Sea, the entire human population was equally strange to them. Thus, Allāh the Almighty sent his religion through a nation for whom the whole world was equally strange.

Since the Arabian character, civilization and society were far from progress and development, it was obvious that it was this universal religion that made them highly civilized, morally disciplined, and a graceful nation, and the teachers and leaders of the world. The spiritual power of the Prophet ﷺ was so tremendous that every nation in every period during his time and after him benefited from him. Moreover, the Qur'ān is the culmination of all the teachings imparted by all the Prophets and guides.

The above last few sentences may be considered strange to the concrete principles of history writing. Since, this book of history is solely meant for Muslim readership and I, too, am a Muslim by the Grace of Allāh the Almighty, I cannot take back these words, which have naturally come from my pen. Whether I am expelled from the assembly of the historians or not, I shall feel happy if I am left to join the company of the Muslim *Ummah*.

## Chapter 2

# **Prophet Muhammad ﷺ**

### The Dawn of Guidance

A little before sunrise, a soft light starts appearing from the east. As stated previously, the entire world was engulfed in the darkness of ignorance and disbelief. When the time came for the end of the dark night, the dawn broke to give glad tidings of the rising sun. Arabia which was then the center of darkness and whose deserts were facing the storms and evils of paganism, gradually began to show signs of the sun of Prophethood coming out and a stream of guidance gushing forth.

Nations of Arabia were living the life of moral depravity, ignorance and deviation. But right from the birth of the Prophet ﷺ, Arabian tribes began to show signs of noble sentiments and the dislike of evil. Waraqah bin Naufal bin Asad bin Abdul-Uzza, Uthmân bin Al-Huwairith bin Asad and Zaid bin Amr bin Nafil-the uncle of Umar bin Khattâb, and Ubaidullah bin Jahsh assembled at a place and began to think over their beliefs and actions. At last, each one of them showed disgust at the worship of idols and stones and set out to various places in search of the religion brought by Ibrahim ﷺ. Waraqah bin Naufal accepted Christianity and went through the Torah and the Gospel with rapt attention. Ubaidullah bin Jahsh found himself unshaken in the quest for religion seeking the worship of one God till Islam appeared and he earnestly embraced it. Then he



migrated to Abyssinia and became a Christian. Uthmân bin Huwairith joined Caesar of Rome and accepted Christianity. Zaid bin Amr neither accepted Judaism nor Christianity nor continued to tread the path of idolatry. He acknowledged as unlawful the use of blood and dead animals and gave up bloodshed and severing of ties with relatives. On inquiry he would say that he worshipped the Lord of Ibrahim ~~ﷺ~~, decried idolatry and counseled his people to desist from evil acts. He would often say:

"O Allâh, had I been aware of the manner of worshipping, I would have worshipped none but You Alone and sought Your Pleasure. But I am unknown to the path of Your Pleasure."

Saying this he would fell down in prostration.

Even the soothsayers and astronomers began to say that a grand Prophet was about to be born in Arabia. Both Jews and Christians populated Arabia. Thus, scholars of both the religions gave the people glad tidings from the Torah and the Gospel of the coming of a great Prophet.

The King of Abyssinia had captured Yemen for a very short period. During the lifetime of Abdul-Muttalib, Yemen was under the rule of the King of Abyssinia. Those days Abrahah Ashram was the governor of Yemen on behalf of the king. He built a temple in Yemen and persuaded the Arabs to perform *Hajj* at the temple of Yemen instead of the Ka'bah. He was not crowned with success in his movement. Moreover, an Arab, in order to put him to disgrace, defecated in the temple. Abrahah grew so furious that he invaded Makkah with the intention of destroying the House of Allâh—the Ka'bah. He also used elephants in his attack, so the people of Makkah called them the people of the Elephant and the year came to be known as the year of the Elephant. When the Quraish came to know of the attack, they were filled with fear, as they were no match for such a large and strong army. They jointly requested their chief, Abdul-Muttalib to go to Abrahah and explore a way to avert the battle. When Abdul-Muttalib presented himself to Abrahah, he was greatly impressed and held him in high esteem. Abdul-Muttalib stated that Abrahah's army had captured two hundred camels, which belonged to him. Thereupon Abrahah remarked that he took him to be a wise person

but he obviously was mistaken. He (Abdul-Muttalib) was quite aware that Abrahah had come with the sole purpose of demolishing the House of Allāh—the Ka'bah. But, intentionally ignoring the topic, he only spoke of his camels instead of saving the Ka'bah. Abdul-Muttalib said:

"I am merely owner of the camels, but this House also has an Owner and He will save it."

The answer enraged Abrahah and he burst out in anger saying he would see if the Lord of the House would save it. His army was destroyed and left like an empty field from which all the corn has been eaten up and only the straw with stalks and stubble was left. The complete rout of Abrahah's forces after the daring reply of Abdul-Muttalib was a very significant event for Arabia which put great fear of Allāh in their hearts.

After that fateful event, the rule of Yemen went out of the hands of the Abyssinian king and Saif bin Dhi Yazin captured the country. Abdul-Muttalib took some nobles of Quraish and went to congratulate Saif on his victory. Saif bin Dhi Yazin gave Abdul-Muttalib glad tidings that the last Prophet would be raised from his (Abdul-Muttalib's) offspring. This prophecy found wide currency and fame. All the members of the delegation thought that the last Prophet would be raised from their progeny. Each of them contacted the soothsayers and monks hoping for good news but returned disappointed.

On the occasion of an important Prophet or Messenger's birth or declaration, the stars in large number would be seen shooting in the sky. Thus close to the birth of last Prophet ﷺ, bright flames appeared in the sky and the scholars of the Scriptures foretold that the time of the birth of the last Prophet ﷺ was near. Thus on Rabi' Al-Awwal 9, in the year of the Elephant corresponding to April 22, 571 CE on Monday, the last Prophet ﷺ was born at dawn before sunrise.

### **The Sacrifice of Abdullah bin Abdul-Muttalib**

The well of Zamzam originated for the sake of Ismail ؑ, when he and his mother Hājira (Hagar) were over taken by thirst, Allāh the

[illegible]

Almighty caused a stream of water to flow in the empty desert. Hājira contained the flowing water by building a mound around it and it turned into a well. At the time of leaving Makkah, Jurhum tribe covered it with dust and so for a long time it became traceless. When the task of giving water to the pilgrims was entrusted to Abdul-Muttalib, he started searching for it along with his elder son Hārith, but their efforts proved fruitless.

### **The Father of Muhammad ﷺ**

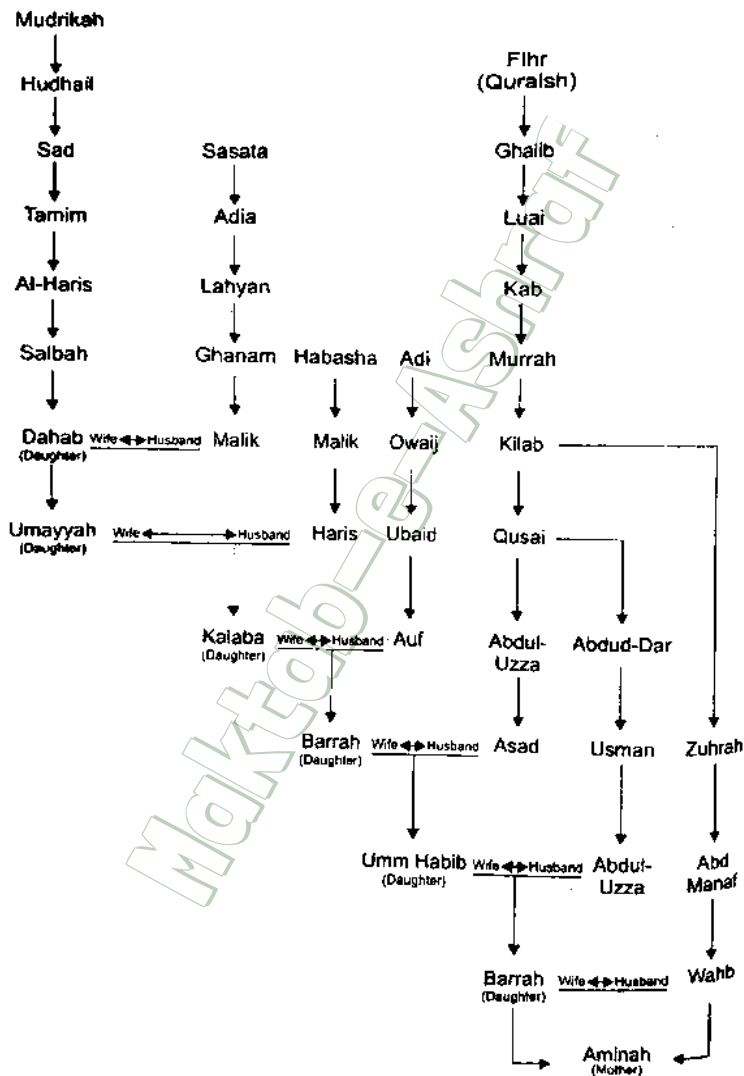
One day Abdul-Muttalib saw in his dream the location of the well of Zamzam and started digging for it. In that spot two idols Isāf and Nāilah were being kept. The Quraish resented this disturbance and became hostile and ready to fight. Although they were only two, father and son, they dominated the scene and continued digging the well. Realizing his isolation Abdul-Muttalib invoked Allāh the Almighty that in case He gave him ten sons, he would sacrifice one of his sons in the name of God. After a short period the well appeared and he was also blessed with ten sons.

The appearance of the Zamzam well established the prestige of Abdul-Muttalib over the Quraish and all of them acknowledged his leadership and virtues. When his sons had grown, he got ready to fulfil his vow. He went to the Ka'bah along with all his sons and drew lots before Hubal. By chance the arrows of chance chose his youngest son, Abdullah who was very dear to Abdul-Muttalib. Since Abdul-Muttalib was adamant in fulfilling his vow, he left for the altar along with Abdullah.

All his brothers, sisters and chiefs of the Quraish tried hard to hold Abdul-Muttalib back from implementing his plan but he remained unshaken. After much discussion they turned to Sajā', a famous soothsayer. She pointed out that blood money for their (Abdul-Muttalib's) clan was ten camels. Thus they should put Abdullah on one side and ten camels on the other and then draw the lots.

In the case that the camels were chosen they would be slaughtered, but if Abdullah is chosen they should add ten more camels and draw again. They should keep adding to the number of the camels until the

## Family of Muhammad ﷺ from Mother's Side



camels were drawn. This exercise went on until the number of camels reached one hundred. Abdul-Muttalib drew the lots twice more for his personal satisfaction but each time it fell upon the camels. Hence one hundred camels were slaughtered and Abdullah was saved. Since that time, the blood money of one killed was fixed at one hundred camels. The table of genealogy of Abdul-Muttalib is given on the facing page.

## **The Birth of the Prophet ﷺ**

Only a few days before the year of Elephant, Abdul-Muttalib married his son, Abdullah to Âminah bint Wahb belonging to a noble family of the Quraish in Yathrib (Al-Madinah). Abdullah was then 24. On the same occasion Abdul-Muttalib himself married Hâlah bint Wuhaib, a relative of Âminah. Hamzah was born from his marriage to Hâlah bint Wuhaib.

A few days after the marriage, Abdul-Muttalib sent Abdullah to Syria along with a trade caravan. On his return, Abdullah fell sick and stayed in Yathrib (Al-Madinah) with his relatives and sent his father news about his illness. Abdul-Muttalib sent his son Hârith to bring Abdullah back to Makkah under his care and protection. But Abdullah died before Hârith reached Al-Madinah and was already buried in the graveyard of his relatives, Banu Najjâr.

Hârith came back to Makkah empty-handed and gave Abdul-Muttalib this soul shattering news. Abdullah had left behind a few camels, goats and a slave-girl, Umm Aiman. Âminah was then pregnant and so the Prophet ﷺ became an orphan while still in the womb of his mother.

He ﷺ was born 52 or 55 days after the event of the year of Elephant. His mother had dreamt an angel telling her that the baby to be born had been named Ahmad. Thus she named him Ahmad, while Abdul-Muttalib named his grandson Muhammad. According to the report of Abul-Fida, when the people asked Abdul-Muttalib as to why he gave his grandson a new name, setting aside all the names current in his family, he replied: "It is because I have a longing that my grandson should be praised and commended by one and all in the world."

## **Childhood Days**

Initially, after his birth, Thuwaibah, the freed slave-girl of Abu Lahab bin Abdul-Muttalib suckled him for seven days. She had suckled Hamzah, the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ also. Thus both Masruh bin Thuwaibah and Hamzah ﷺ were his foster brothers. According to the custom of the Arab nobles, on the eighth day he was entrusted to lady Halimah of the Banu Sa'd clan of the Hawâzin tribe to suckle him and bring him up. The nobles of Arabia would entrust their babies to bedouin women so that they would become healthy and strong in the open and free climate of the desert. Besides it would help develop eloquent speech, because the language of the bedouin was more pure, graceful and eloquent than those living in urban areas.

Halimah Sa'diyah would come to Makkah twice a year to show him to his mother and grandfather. Halimah Sa'diyah suckled him for two years and he remained with her for four years altogether. His mother summoned him to Makkah at the end of four years. When he was six, his mother took him to his relatives in Al-Madinah (Yathrib). On the return journey after a month, she passed away at Abwa. Abdul-Muttalib took upon himself the responsibilities of looking after the boy. According to other narrations, he ﷺ remained with Banu Sa'd for five years. He ﷺ was five years of age and he was out grazing goats along with his foster brother and sisters and other boys of the same age when the event of the opening up of his chest occurred.

According to a narration of *Seerat Ibn Hishâm*, Halimah bint Abu Dhuaib relates this event in these words: "One day both of my children came fearfully to me and said that two cleanly dressed persons seized our Quraishi brother and split open his chest. I went to the spot along with my husband (Hârith bin Abdul-Uzza) and saw that he ﷺ was sitting there with his face turned pale. Upon inquiry he stated that two cleanly dressed persons came to him, laid him down with his face up, took out his heart, and extracted something from it." But Halimah found no trace of any injury or spot of blood. Having thought that the boy was affected by a jinn or something, she brought him to Makkah without loss of time and related the whole event to his mother. But his mother instead of being afraid of what had happened,

spoke with all the confidence at her command that her son would achieve a very distinctive place in the world, and would surely remain safe from all calamities. She told that when he was in her womb, she heard many things from the angels and noticed many uncommon happenings. Imam Muslim reports from Anas bin Mâlik ؓ that one day when he ؓ was playing with the boys of Makkah, Jibril (Gabriel) ؑ came to him, split his chest, took out a black drop from it and said: "It was the portion of Satan." Following that he washed his heart in a tray of gold with Zamzam water and then put it in its place.

### **Death of Abdul-Muttalib**

After being brought up for two years under the care and guardianship of Abdul-Muttalib, he ؓ reached eight years of age that Abdul-Muttalib passed away. When Abdul-Muttalib's funeral procession was proceeding, he ؓ joined it with tearful eyes. However, Abdul-Muttalib had entrusted him to his son Abu Tâlib before his death, stressing the utmost care and protection for the boy. Despite having several other sons, Abdul-Muttalib was wise enough to give him to the care of Abu Tâlib because he and Abdullah, the father of the boy, were born of the same mother. The assessment of Abdul-Muttalib came true and the nephew became Abu Tâlib's favorite.

### **Support of Abu Tâlib**

Abu Tâlib took special care of his nephew and held him dearer than his own sons. He made him sleep on his own bed. He ؓ passed his childhood days in a manner quite strange for the Arabian society. Instead of playing with children of his age group, he felt disgusted in their company and preferred to be in solitude. Allâh the Almighty had kept him aloof from every kind of debasement and depravity. A few boys of Quraish forced him to enjoy a marriage celebration where there was dance and music too. But as he reached the spot he was overtaken by sleep and kept sleeping the whole night and got up only when the assembly had dispersed at the end of the celebration. He ؓ was thus saved from the undesirable and forbidden activities of the marriage ceremony.



He ﷺ was, perhaps, seven years old when the Quraish started rebuilding the Ka'bah which had suffered damage from a flood. During the construction work, he ﷺ joined the party of workers carrying stones and giving them to the masons. He was wearing *Izâr* (waist sheet) which was causing him some trouble doing the work. The nakedness of a boy of seven was not then considered something improper. So, his uncle Abbâs grabbed hold of the waist sheet and pulled it so violently that he ﷺ became naked. He grew shameful to the extent that he fell down unconscious. At last, the people felt the gravity of the situation and put his waist sheet back on and he recovered.

### **First Journey to Syria**

He ﷺ was twelve years old when Abu Tâlib planned to go with a merchant caravan to Syria leaving him behind in Makkah. But he ﷺ was so used to the company of Abu Tâlib that he could not bear separation from his uncle. Abu Tâlib felt moved and agreed to take him to Syria. When the caravan reached Busra, the southeastern part of Syria, a Christian monk named Bahira saw and recognized him as the Last Prophet. He came to Abu Tâlib and let him know that his nephew was set to become a Prophet as he had noticed with him all the signs of Prophethood written in the Torah and the Gospel. He then advised Abu Tâlib to hurry back with his nephew. Abu Tâlib acted upon the advice.

### **Harb Al-Fijâr, First Participation in Battle**

A great fair was regularly held at Ukâz. This fair would organize a number of programs including horse races, wrestling, demonstrations of the art of combat and poetic competitions. All the tribes of Arabia were highly belligerent by nature and drew swords against one another at the smallest incident.

Once, in the course of the fair at Ukâz, the Hawâzin and Quraish tribes challenged each other due to a slight provocation. At the outset some wise and sober people stood in the way and put the matter right. But some mischief-mongers worsened the situation which led to large-scale fighting and killing on both sides. The war was known as

*Harb' Al-Fijār* because it took place in the month of Dhul-Qa'dah when fighting was altogether forbidden. This war was based on a series of four wars in which three firsts were small and the fourth war happened to be more fierce than the preceding one as all the tribes of Qais joined the Hawâzin tribe while all the tribes of Kinânah came to the help of the Quraish. Thus this war developed to become a war between the Qais and Kinânah tribes. The fourth and the last war was so terrible that some of the chieftains had their feet chained so they couldn't leave from the field of battle.

The Prophet ﷺ joined this fourth war for the first time armed with weapons. Among Banu Kinânah, every tribe had its separate commander. Thus the commander of Banu Hâshim was Zubair bin Abdul-Muttalib, an uncle of the Prophet ﷺ while Harb bin Umayyah was the commander of all the troops of Banu Kinânah. Muhammad ﷺ was then fifteen or twenty years of age. He was entrusted with the service of picking up the arrows for his uncles. However, he was saved from combat action. At the outset Banu Hawâzin seemed to be dominating, but at last, Banu Kinânah turned the table against the Banu Qais and war ended on peace treaty.

## Trade

When the Prophet ﷺ became a young man, he turned towards trade as a vocation. His uncle Abu Tâlib also liked this work for his nephew. Several times he accompanied trade caravans with his merchandise and every time he returned with a substantial profit. The people during these journeys had ample opportunity to observe his qualities of honest dealings and graceful behavior. Besides, all those in Makkah with whom he entered into business terms, became witness to his trusty, truthful, upright and gracious character.

A Companion, Abdullah bin Abul-Hamsa relates: "Before his deputation to the Prophethood, I had entered into a business dealing with the Prophet ﷺ. The dealing was not yet concluded when I had to leave for another place in haste. But, before leaving I asked the Prophet ﷺ to wait until I returned to finalize the deal. After taking leave from him I forgot our appointment and when I returned by the same route on the third day, I found the Prophet ﷺ waiting at the

same spot. When I drew near the Prophet ﷺ, he said to me only this much: 'You put me through a great deal of trouble. I am still waiting for you here.'" Similarly, when Sā'ib embraced Islam, some people spoke highly of him in the presence of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ. He ﷺ remarked: "I know Sā'ib more than all of you." Sā'ib submitted: "May my mother and father be sacrificed for you, once you had been my partner in business and you always made fair dealings."

### **Offer of Khadijah**

Khadijah bint Khuwailid, a noble lady of Banu Asad, was a wealthy woman of the Quraish. She was then a widow after marrying two men. Her second husband had left behind much wealth and property. Khadijah would send her merchandise to Syria, Iraq and Yemen through her workers. When she came to know of the honesty and trustworthiness of the Prophet ﷺ, she sent her nephew Qatimah with her desire that he should work for her and go to Syria with her merchandise. He after consulting his uncle Abu Tālib, accepted the proposal. Khadijah fixed for him a reasonable remuneration. Khadijah's slave Maisarah and a relative of hers named Khuzaimah bin Hakim accompanied him.

### **Second Journey to Syria**

The trade caravan headed by the Prophet ﷺ halted near a monastery in Syria. In the monastery lived a monk named Nastura. When he saw the Prophet ﷺ, he fetched some heavenly book and began to compare his body and face with what was written in the Books about him. Khuzaimah fell in doubt about the monk's intentions and raised an alarm for help. All the Quraish rushed to the spot and the monk ran upstairs. From upstairs he told the people of the caravan that there was nothing to fear, and he was just comparing the Prophet's signs and features with those written in the Books and found in him every sign mentioned. This statement of the monk brought peace of mind to all.

This journey was also crowned with substantial success and profit. It is said that thus he headed the trade caravans of Khadijah to Bahrain, Yemen, and Syria and returned with a profit every time.

## **Marriage**

His honesty, trustworthiness, graceful character, piety, nobility and high quality were no longer a secret from Khadijah ؓ. Although almost every noble and man of means in Makkah had a yearning rooted in his mind to marry her, but she herself, through a woman named Nafisah or Ātikah bint Abdul-Muttalib, sent the Prophet ﷺ her marriage proposal. Abu Tālib accepted the proposal and delivered the marriage address. All the relatives of the Prophet ﷺ as well as of Khadijah ؓ participated in the marriage ceremony. At the time of marriage, the Prophet ﷺ was 25 years of age and Khadijah ؓ was 40. She gave birth to three sons and four daughters.

## **Titles of *Sādiq* & *Al-Amin* (Truthful & the Trusty)**

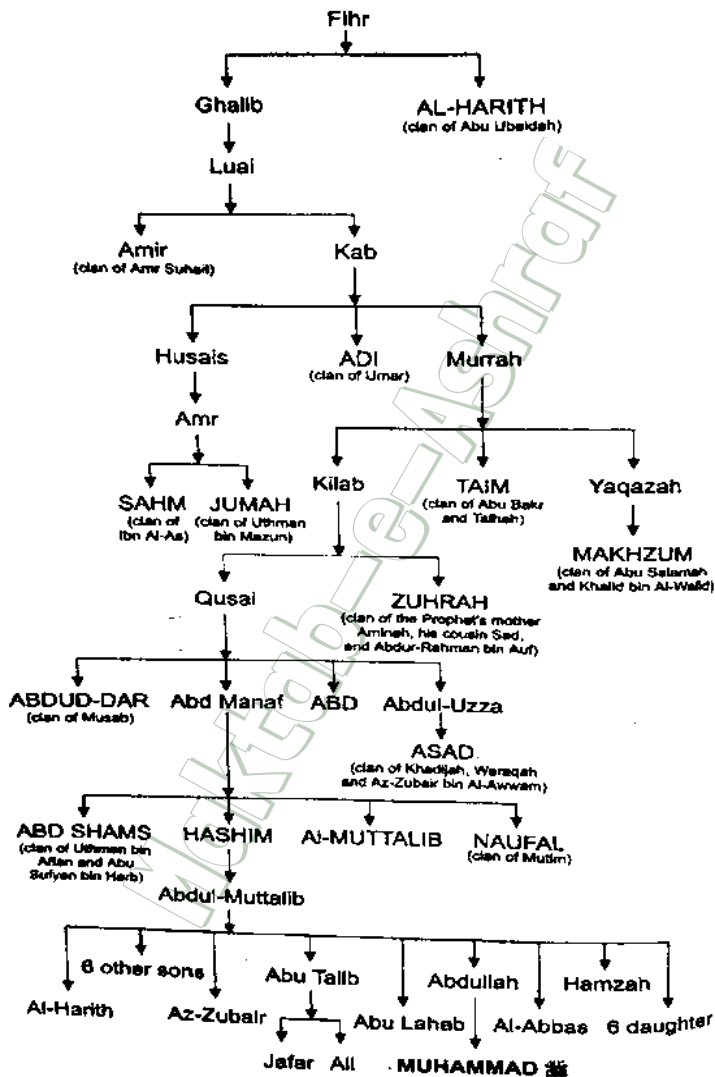
Not only in Makkah but also throughout Arabia his virtues, uprightness, honesty and trustworthiness gained such a wide currency that they called him *As-Sādiq* (the Truthful) or *Al-Amin* (the Trusty) instead of calling him by his name. Mrs. Annie Beasant, the Head of Theosophical Society of India and a noted English lady writes:

"The exclusive quality of the great Prophet (Muhammad ﷺ) which implanted in my heart his greatness and glory is that which led people to call him *Al-Amin* (the honest one). No quality can excel this nor any other thing can be worthy of being followed both by Muslims and non-Muslims. A personality, which is the embodiment of truth, can leave nothing to doubt about. Such a person alone deserves carrying the message of truth."

## **Renewal of *Hilf-ul-Fudul***

Sometime in the olden days, some selected ones of Arabia had pledged together to help the oppressed and fight against the oppressors. Almost all who had entered the agreement had the word *Fadl* attached to their names and their pledge took the name *Hilf-ul-Fudul*. Although the group was no longer existent in Arabia, the

# The Leaders of Quraish Tribes



[The names of the founders of clans are given in Capitals.]

people often referred to the name of that organization in their conversations. After the *Harb Al-Fijār*, Zubair bin Abdul-Muttalib, an uncle of the Prophet ﷺ felt the need of reviving the movement. Thus a few people assembled at the house of Abdullah bin Jad'ān and pledged afresh to combat the oppressors and help the oppressed. The Prophet ﷺ also joined that pledge.

After a period he ﷺ brought to the chieftains and distinguished people around him the idea to rise as one man to redeem the Arab society from evils like oppression, highway robbery, excesses perpetrated on the weak and the poor on the part of the strong and wealthy. His sincere efforts brought fruit and an organization of Banu Hāshim, Banu Al-Muttalib, Banu Asad, Banu Zuhrah and Banu Tamīm was set up. Every member had to pledge: (1) We shall wipe out disorder from the country; (2) Safeguard the travelers and wayfarers; (3) Help the poor; and (4) Check the tyrants from doing wrong. The organization served the people gracefully. During his Prophethood he ﷺ would say: "If I were invited to have a hand in it even after the advent of Islam, I would have undoubtedly joined again."

### **Appointed as Arbitrator by the Quraish**

The Ka'bah once caught fire due to some carelessness causing deep cracks in its walls. The Quraish agreed to rebuild it but none was ready to demolish it for fear of being overtaken by some calamity. At last, Walid bin Mughirah among the chieftains began it. Other tribes eventually joined the demolition work. About the same time a ship suffered wreckage near the port of Jeddah. The Quraish bought the wooden parts of the broken ship. When the construction work reached up to the point where the *Hajar Aswad* (Black Stone) was to be placed, a serious dispute erupted, for the chieftain of every tribe wanted to place the sacred relic into its place. They were ready to fight and swords were drawn. The impasse continued for five days. At last the Quraish tribes assembled at the Ka'bah and a meeting was immediately convened. Abu Umayyah bin Mughirah brought forward a suggestion that the man first to enter the gate of the Ka'bah would be made umpire in the matter of a dispute. The first man to

come in was Allāh's Messenger ﷺ. "This is Muhammad," they said as soon as they saw him coming. "He is trustworthy and we all agree to his decision." The fact that every tribe was desirous for and claimed the honor was understandable. However, in their classical destructive manner they were all making pledges to fight unto death by thrusting their fingers into a bowl full of blood according to the custom of the times. It was in this atmosphere that they entrusted to the Prophet ﷺ this major responsibility and honor with all the different factions satisfied and in agreement. This is irrefutable proof of the fact that they all had profound faith in his honesty and justice. He ﷺ first acquainted himself with the matter and then put an end to the dispute quickly so that all the people, old and experienced were left wondering at his sagacity, power of decision and sense of justice. All of them raised their voices in appreciation.

The Prophet ﷺ asked them to bring a piece of cloth. He ﷺ took the Black Stone and put it on the cloth, and asked each tribe to take hold of an end of the cloth and lift it to the required height. When the people lifted the stone in the proper manner, the Prophet ﷺ placed it in its position with his own hands, and the building went on above it. Utbah bin Rabi'ah bin Abd Shams, Aswad bin Muttalib bin Asad bin Abdul-Uzza, Abu Hudhaifah bin Mughirah bin Umar bin Makhzum and Qais bin Adi As-Sahmi were the four persons most deeply involved in the dispute but they, too returned happy and satisfied. Had a war broken out, it would have left all the past wars behind in ferocity and bloodshed. The Prophet ﷺ was only thirty-five years of age when He ﷺ brought an end to the dispute of Black Stone.

### Support for the Poor

He ﷺ had excelled all others in Makkah with respect to honor and popularity, and he had no enemy throughout Arabia. His wisdom, uprightness, honesty and trustworthiness were the talk of the country. He was a trader by profession and he was passing his life in easy circumstances after his marriage with Khadijah ﷺ. Once famine broke out, Abu Tālib had to shoulder the responsibility of a big family, and despite being the chieftain of Banu Hāshim, he passed his days in poverty and want. Having seen his plight, the Prophet ﷺ told his

uncle, Abbās bin Abdul-Muttalib about the famine and the difficulties that Abu Tālib was facing. He further said that it would be better if they each took one of his sons under their care. Abbās agreed and both of them went to Abu Tālib and expressed their desire. Abu Tālib gave his consent for Ali and Ja'far. Thus Ali was taken by the Prophet ﷺ and Ja'far by Abbās. This happened the same year when the Ka'bah was rebuilt.

### **His Love for Zaid bin Hārithah**

Hakim bin Harām, the nephew of Khadijah ﷺ had purchased a slave and offered him to his father's sister, Khadijah ﷺ, who gave him to the Prophet ﷺ. It was this slave who was known as Zaid bin Hārithah. He belonged to an Arabian family but was captured during plunder and sold as a slave. When Zaid's father Hārithah and his uncle Ka'b came to know that Zaid lived with a man in Makkah as his slave, both of them went to Makkah and requested the Prophet ﷺ to release Zaid. He ﷺ granted their request at once and said that Zaid was at liberty to accompany them if he so desired.

Zaid was then sent for. He ﷺ asked him, "Do you know these two?" Zaid replied, "Yes! They are my father and uncle." He ﷺ then said, "They have come to take you with them. I give you permission to accompany them." Zaid replied, "I can't part company with you." Thereupon Zaid's father rebuked him and said, "Do you prefer slavery to liberty?" Zaid answered back, "I have noticed in Muhammad ﷺ such things that I can prefer none to him in the whole universe." Having heard this reply of Zaid, the Prophet ﷺ got up, took Zaid with him and entering Ka'bah cried in a loud voice: "O people! Be witness to it that today I set Zaid free and adopt him as my son, this is my heir from today and I am his." This moving sight delighted both the father and uncle of Zaid and they went away leaving their son in the company of the Prophet ﷺ.

From that day the boy came to be called Zaid bin Muhammad instead of Zaid bin Hārithah until Revelation was sent to the Prophet ﷺ after his emigration that an adopted son cannot be a substitute for one's own son. Thus he returned to the name Zaid bin Hārithah. But he enjoyed the love and affection of the Prophet ﷺ in the same measure



and it kept increasing with the passage of time. This particular event also tells a lot about the treatment and manners of Muhammad ﷺ before being elevated to the lofty position of Prophethood.

### Inclined to Allāh

He ﷺ was 32 or 33 years of age when he developed in himself a love for solitude and privacy. He so often saw a strange light, which led him to feel a unique joy, although he never saw any figure nor heard any voice. He ﷺ naturally abhorred polytheism. Once during a meeting, the pagans served him some food which had already been dedicated to the idols. He ﷺ put it aside towards Zaid bin Amr. But he also refused to eat from it and said addressing the pagans: "We do not eat from the food that was offered to idols." This Zaid bin Amr bin Nufail was the uncle of Umar bin Khattāb ؓ.

During the hours of privacy and solitude, he ﷺ would ponder over the Divine powers and kept praising and glorifying his Lord. The more he ﷺ was drawing near the age of forty, the more he felt attracted to privacy. He would very often go to the Cave of Hira, taking with him parched barley meal and water, to pray Allāh in perfect peace and privacy and returned only when the supplies would run short. The Mount of Hira, now known as *Jabal Nur* (Mountain of Light), has a cave. It is situated at a distance of three miles from Makkah towards the north on the way to Mina. The cave has a length of four yards and a breadth of three-quarters of a yard. During those days he had true dreams and had dreams in the night about the happenings of the next day. About seven years passed in the same state, but during the last six months he frequently had true dreams.

### Sunrise

Muhammad ﷺ was forty years old and now rose the sun of Prophethood. When the power of endurance and shouldering the heavy burden of Revelation had attained full growth by constant prayers, ceaseless exercises and deep reflection in solitude, an angel appeared before him and said addressing him, "Read." The Prophet ﷺ answered, "I cannot read." The angel took and pressed him and

then let him go and said again, "Read." The Prophet ﷺ replied for the second time, "I cannot read." The angel again pressed him tightly and then letting him go said, "Read." When the Prophet ﷺ replied once again, "I cannot read." He took him and pressed tightly a third time in the same manner. He then let the Prophet ﷺ go and said:

"Read! In the Name of your Lord who has created,

"Created man from a clot.

"Read! and your Lord is the Most Generous,

"Who has taught by the pen,

"Has taught man that which he knew not." (96:1-5)

Having said this the angel disappeared, but dizzy and frightened, the Messenger ﷺ came back home and went to Khadijah ؓ and said: "Wrap me up, wrap me up," Khadijah ؓ wrapped him up in a blanket. When he ﷺ regained peace of mind after a short while, he related to Khadijah ؓ what had happened to him with the remark, "I feel my life threatened."

### **Historic Words of Khadijah ؓ**

Khadijah ؓ said in reply:

"By no means, I swear to Allāh that He would never put you to shame. You join the ties of relationship, you speak the truth, you bear people's burdens, you help the destitute, you entertain guests and you mitigate the pains and grief suffered for the sake of truth."

After comforting and encouraging her husband, she took him to her cousin Waraqah bin Naufal, who had grown old by then. When the Prophet ﷺ told him what he had seen and heard, Waraqah cried out, "There has come unto you the same *Namūs*, who had come unto Prophet Moses aforetime. Had I been young and living by the time when your people will cast you out." The Prophet ﷺ demanded from Waraqah, "What? will they expel me?" "Yes," replied Waraqah, "for whenever a Messenger of Allāh came and preached *Tauhid* (Oneness of Allāh) he was maltreated and put to untold miseries." Afterwards the Prophet ﷺ kept visiting the Cave of Hira. But no Revelation came to him for sometime.

One day he ﷺ was on his way home from the Cave of Hira when he sighted the same angel and got frightened. He hurried back home and wrapped himself up in a mantle and lay down. In the meantime he heard a majestic voice saying:

“O you wrapped up in garments! Arise and warn; And magnify your Lord; And purify your garments; And keep away from abomination, polytheism and evils.” (74:1-5)

From then on Revelation kept coming after short intervals. One day Jibril (Gabriel), the Trusty took the Prophet ﷺ to the foot of a hill and performed *Wudu'* (ablution) before the Prophet ﷺ and the latter did the same. Afterwards Jibril, the Trusty led the prayer.

### **Preaching of Islam**

He ﷺ embarked upon preaching *Tauhid* (Oneness of Allāh) as he received the Command of Allāh to do so. He started the task of keeping people away from polytheism and inviting to *Tauhid* right from his household, with the result that Khadijah ؓ was the first to embrace Islam. Ali bin Abu Tālib ؓ and Zaid bin Hārithah ؓ were also converted to Islam the very first day. These all belonged to his household. Abu Bakr bin Abu Quhāfah ؓ who was the Prophet's friend, accepted Islam the same day. Now, the individuals to become Muslims on the first day were his family members and his best friend. These were the people who knew the Prophet ﷺ well and were aware of his traits and character for a very long time, and no aspect of his life was a secret to them. Now, their embracing of Islam the very first day was an outstanding proof of his truthfulness and uprightness.

At the outset, he kept his teachings and preaching quiet, limiting them to his relatives and close friends. In the earliest period of the preaching of Islam, Abu Bakr ؓ extended his services most prominently. He had a very wide and large circle of friends and acquaintances under his influence, which brought Uthmān bin Affān, Talhah bin Ubaidullah, Sa'd bin Abu Waqqās, Abdur Rahmān bin Auf, and Zubair bin Awwām ؓ to the fold of Islam. Uthmān bin Maz'un, Qudāmah bin Maz'un, Saeed bin Zaid, Fātimah—the sister of Umar bin Khattāb and wife of Saeed ؓ were next to join the caravan

of Islam. Another band to enter the circle of Islam constituted individuals like Umair, the brother of Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs, Abdullah bin Mas'ud, and Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib ﷺ. Thus came into being a small group of Muslim men, women, youths, old men and children. The believing men would go beyond Makkah in the mountain pass to pray to Allâh for fear of their lives. Three years passed silently and secretly in preaching Islam, and people renouncing the abominable life of polytheism and idolatry came running to the fold of Islam. But, during this span of three years, every assembly and company of the Quraish was agog with the stir created by Islam. They had nothing to discuss but the new religion.

The Quraish, at the outset, attached no importance to the movement of Islam nor did it look menacing in its early stage. Thus they didn't go beyond poking fun at the believers, jeering at them and hurting them verbally. However, in some cases, mischief-mongers among them inflicted physical troubles on individual Muslims also. Once Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ﷺ was performing prayers in a mountain pass along with a few Muslims. All of a sudden a few pagans passed by them and tried to hold the Muslims back from doing so by force. Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs rose against them and a disbeliever received an injury from his sword. This was the first sword fight in the cause of Allâh the Almighty.

Once the Prophet ﷺ and Ali ﷺ were performing prayers in a mountain pass. By chance, Abu Tâlib arrived at the scene and kept silent watching them. When the prayer was over, he said, "What's this religion that you have adopted?" "This is the Religion of Ibrahim." They said, and added, "you should also accept it." Abu Tâlib replied, "I shall not renounce the religion of my ancestors," and said turning to Ali ﷺ, "My son! Never part company with Muhammad. I am sure he will lead you to nothing but good."

## **Proclamation of Truth from Mount of Safa**

Now came the Revelation:

"Therefore proclaim openly that which you are commanded."  
(15:94)

With this order the Prophet ﷺ ascended the Mount of Safa and gave a call to each and every tribe by name in a raised voice. Having heard this call, the people in a large number gathered in front of him according to the practice of Arabia. Thereafter he ﷺ said addressing them, "O Quraish! If I tell you that your enemy is about to attack you, would you believe me?" They unanimously replied, "Yes." "We have always found you truthful and trustworthy." Having heard this answer, the Prophet ﷺ said to them, "Well, I am a warner to you before a severe chastisement overtakes you." Hearing this they burst into laughter, Abu Lahab exclaimed, "May you perish. Is it for this you have brought us here?" Following this the people dispersed. As Abu Lahab left, *Sûrat Al-Masad* (111) was revealed.

After a few days he ﷺ was ordered:

"And warn your kith and kin." (26:214)

Following this the Prophet ﷺ asked Ali bin Abu Tâlib ؑ to throw a party and invite his relatives. About forty persons attended it. At the end of the feast the Prophet ﷺ rose to say something but nonsensical utterances of Abu Lahab took away from the Prophet ﷺ an opportunity to warn them of the consequences of their evil doings. After a gap of a few days another feast was arranged and as his relatives finished their meal, the Prophet ﷺ rose to say, "Look! I have come to you with something that none else ever brought for his tribe. Tell me who will lend his support to me in this task?" Hearing this nobody made any response but Abu Tâlib assured him of his support.

### **Open endeavor to preach**

The Prophet ﷺ gave the call to *Tauhid* (Oneness of Allâh) and Islam. During this period his small and weak band of people had to bear the brunt of their new faith. In assemblies and gatherings, in fairs and market places, and by contacting people at their homes, he would teach people the virtues of *Tauhid* (Oneness of Allâh) and forbid them from idolatry. Adultery gambling, lying, embezzlement, theft, and robbery were made taboo. The Quraish were proud people. It was not easy for them to put up with derogatory remarks against their ancestors' faith and practices. They were also very particular about

the distinction between slaves and their masters. But Islam believed in the equality of both of them. The Quraish and the Makkans were held in high esteem by all the tribes in Arabia only due to the idols that they would come to Makkah to worship. Islam was, on the other hand, the sworn enemy of idolatry. The chieftains and respectable men of Makkah could not step down from their positions and follow the Prophet ﷺ. Most of the tribes were at enmity with Banu Hâshim, so they could not accept a man from a rival tribe to lead them. Thus open preaching ignited the fire of hostility and antagonism all over Arabia which turned into a blaze during the fourth year of the Prophethood.

### **First Educational Institution**

About the same period, the Prophet ﷺ set up the house of Arqam bin Abu Arqam at the bottom of the Mount of Safa as an educational institution. Every new convert would come to this institution to learn the teachings of Islam. Gradually it became a crowded place and the Prophet ﷺ would lead the prayer. This house served as the center of all Islamic activities and the dwelling of the Prophet ﷺ for three years. Those who joined the Islamic movement at this stage are considered to be the Foremost Muslims. The last to embrace Islam in Dar Arqam was Umar bin Khattâb ؓ. His acceptance of Islam proved a turning point in the Islamic movement.

### **Antagonism of the Quraish**

Among the entrants to Islam some were slaves and some of them had no powerful tribes or relatives to defend them. Such weak and powerless people became the easy victims of the disbelievers and suffered physical tortures. Muslims in general were put to ridicule of the most unkind nature so that others would not dare join the new faith. Bilâl ؓ was the slave of Umayyah bin Khalaf who put him to great torture. He used to bring him out at noontime and throw him on his back on the burning sand, ordering a heavy hot rock to be placed on his chest. At times his both arms were tied behind and he was lashed mercilessly. Sometimes he was kept hungry and handed over to street urchins with a rope tied round his neck and they would pull

him through the streets and alleys and to the hills beyond the city. But Bilāl ؓ would bear all these soul-shattering miseries with *Ahad, Ahad* (One, One) upon his lips. Ammār ؓ embraced Islam along with his father Yāsir ؓ and mother Sumaiyah ؓ. Abu Jahl tortured them beyond description. The wicked Abu Jahl stuck his spear in Sumaiyah ؓ and she was honored with martyrdom. Abu Jahl once gave Zanirah ؓ such a severe beating that she became blind. Hairs stand on end to think of the cruelties committed against the slaves and slave-girls, the weak and the downtrodden. But Islam is such a powerful force that nobody went astray and became an apostate because of these tortures.

Uthmān bin Affān ؓ was a wealthy man from the Umayyah tribe. On becoming Muslim he was tied with a rope, thrashed severely and put to many other physical troubles. Zubair bin Al-Awwām's uncle tried to control him by wrapping him in a mat. While reciting the Qur'ān, Abu Dhar Ghifār ؓ was so mercilessly beaten that he fell unconscious. He was about to be killed, when Abbās bin Abdul-Muttalib passed by and asked them to leave him because the Banu Ghifār tribe inhabited a strategic spot on the route their trade caravans passed through. Abdullah bin Mas'ud ؓ was also beaten to unconsciousness. Khabbāb bin Aratt ؓ was once made to lie down on his back on burning embers and a man sat on his chest so that he could not move or change sides, with the result that the flesh and skin of his back and waist were burned off.

### **Insulting Behavior to the Prophet ﷺ**

Once the Prophet ﷺ was saying his prayers at the Ka'bah when Uqbah bin Abu Muait twisted his neck with a piece of cloth until he ؓ was nearly strangled. On being informed, Abu Bakr ؓ rushed to the spot and saved the Prophet ﷺ from the mischief, and then said addressing the Quraish: "Would you kill a person simply because he claims that Allāh is his Lord?" Thereupon they left the Prophet ﷺ and grappled with Abu Bakr ؓ and manhandled him very roughly. Once the Quraish surrounded the Prophet ﷺ on all sides and began to treat him rudely and disrespectfully. Hārith bin Abu Hālah hurried to the place in order to save him from the clutches of the criminals but the

disbelievers martyred him. However, they dared not manhandle the Prophet ﷺ. Thorns were spread on the way he had to pass in the night so that his feet were wounded.

Once the Prophet ﷺ was performing prayers in the courtyard of Ka'bah in the presence of the Quraish. Abu Jahl said to the people: "A camel has been slaughtered at such and such place and its intestines are still lying there. One should fetch them and put it on Muhammad." Hearing this, Uqbah bin Abu Muait got up and fetched the intestines and put it on the back of the Prophet ﷺ when he was prostrating. The disbelievers were overtaken by laughter. Although Abdullah bin Mas'ud was present there, he could not muster the courage to do the needful. By chance, Fâtimah ؓ who was then of tender age, removed the intestines from the back of her father reproaching them in strong words.

They used to throw stones, filth and refuse at his house. Once he ﷺ said, "O Banu Abd Manâf, how well you are at fulfilling the rights of a neighbor." The Prophet ﷺ was sometimes called a poet and at times he was branded as a sorcerer, a soothsayer, or insane. In short, the disbelievers of Makkah left no stone unturned in putting the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions to the utmost physical and mental torture and tried to block his mission. But the Prophet ﷺ was determined to fulfill his sacred mission with unshakable conviction. When the Quraish were perfectly convinced that their opposition to the mission would bear no fruit, they adopted another plan.

### **An Offer of all earthly Desires and a Plain Reply**

The Quraish held consultations over the issue and sent Utbah bin Rabi'ah to the Prophet ﷺ with a proposal. He said very politely, "Muhammad, you are noble and belong to a noble and illustrious family. But you have created a rift in your people. Tell me what do you want? If you want to have wealth, we will collect enough of it that you will be the richest of all of us. If you desire to be a leader, we will make you our chief and are ready to accept your rule. If you want to marry someone, we shall arrange your marriage with the most beautiful lady of the highest and most respectable family and if you are eager for these simultaneously, we can provide you with all this."



When Utbah had finished, the Prophet ﷺ began to recite *Sūrat As-Sajdah* in response to his speech. When he came to: "But if they turn away, then say: 'I have warned you of a destructive torment like the torment which overtook Âd and Thamud.'" (41:13), Utbah turned pale and put his hand on the mouth of the Prophet ﷺ requesting him not to say such things. The Prophet ﷺ then prostrated and raising his head said, "Did you get my reply?" Utbah left the place and came back to the Quraish, and said, "Take my advice and leave this man alone and be neutral in his case. If he brings Arabia under his control then, since he is your brother, his success implies your success; and if he meets his doom, you are happily safe." Hearing this the Quraish said to Utbah, "It appears Muhammad has cast a spell on you." Utbah replied, "You say whatever you like, I have already expressed my opinion."

### **Deputation of the Quraish to Abu Tâlib**

When the efforts of Utbah met with failure, a delegation comprising Utbah, Shebah, Abul-Bukhtari, Aswad, Walid, and Abu Jahl came to Abu Tâlib and complained: "Your nephew doesn't refrain from insulting our idols, make him understand and hold him back from such moves." Abu Tâlib replied to them suitably and protested against their excesses. That day they returned but the very next day they again came to Abu Tâlib after consultations. They made the same suggestions before Abu Tâlib that Utbah had already put forward. They began to say, "O Muhammad, we have sent for you to tell you that none has ever brought so much trouble to the people as you have done. If you, by this new faith of yours, intend to collect money, we can amass it for you that which none could excel. We will make you our chief if you have a longing for rule, we are ready to install you as our king. If you are possessed by a ghost or a jinni of which you have no remedy, we will find a skillful physician and soothsayer for you."

Having heard all this, the Prophet ﷺ recited a few Verses from the Qur'ân in response to what they said, and then said to them, "Allâh the Almighty has sent me as His Messenger to you. I have to convey His Message. In case you accept my teachings, you will be crowned with success in both the worlds; if you reject it, I shall be waiting for

the Decision of Allāh the Almighty." In response to this call they said, "Well, if you are the Messenger of God, remove these mountains from Arabia, make the deserts green, bring our forefathers back to life, particularly, Qusai bin Kilāb. If Qusai bin Kilāb, after becoming alive, accepts you as truthful and accepts your Prophethood, we shall also follow suit." The Prophet ﷺ said in reply, "I have not been sent as a Messenger for such things. I have come to convey to you the commands that Allāh the Almighty revealed to me and make you comprehend them fully. I can't do anything out of my own will." After this exchange, the chieftains of the Quraish got up in wrath and left challenging even Abu Tālib to rise to face them.

After they left, Abu Tālib said to the Prophet ﷺ with the utmost affection, "My nephew, I have now grown old and it is not within my power to face the onslaught of the Quraish. Put me not in such a trouble, which is beyond my power. It is fitting for you to hold back from reviling the idols." Having heard this, the Prophet ﷺ replied with all the confidence at his command, "Dear uncle! If they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in the left, I shall not forsake it." What Abu Tālib told him created doubt in the mind of the Prophet ﷺ that he intended to withdraw his support for him. Abu Tālib commanded the highest respect among the chieftains of Makkah and was the universally accepted chief of the Banu Hāshim tribe. The opponents of the Prophet ﷺ were reluctant to attack him simply because of the presence of Abu Tālib. Now the disappointing utterances of Abu Tālib filled the eyes of the Prophet ﷺ with tears. He ﷺ got up and walked away saying, "Uncle! I shall not give up my mission till it is fulfilled or I am undone accomplishing it." When Abu Tālib heard this, he was moved from within and sent for him and said, "Do keep engaged in your mission; I shall neither withdraw my support nor consign you to your enemies while it is within my power."

## **Migration to Abyssinia**

When all their efforts failed and the mission of preaching *Tauhid* (Oneness of Allāh) remained continuous, they felt the power and strength of it. Thus they reacted violently and stopped the Prophet ﷺ

from entering the Ka'bah, and set the louts and riffraff to raise a hue and cry against him and the believers, calling them bad names and making their movements impossible, and they didn't allow them to meet people from outside Makkah. They began to persecute the weak and the poor more intensely. Life became very hard and almost impossible to live.

Witnessing this sad and tragic plight of the believers, the Prophet ﷺ allowed them to leave for Abyssinia (where the Christians ruled). Thus in the month of Rajab, the 5th year of the Prophethood, a band of eleven men and four women left Makkah for Abyssinia. They secretly reached the port of Shu'aibah where there was a ship with its anchor lowered. They boarded the ship and reached Abyssinia. Among those foremost migrants were:

Uthmân bin Affân, his wife Ruqayyah (the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ), Hudhaifah bin Utbah, Uthmân bin Maz'un, Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf, Zubair bin Al-Awwâm, Mus'ab bin Umair, Amir bin Rabi'ah and Suhail bin Baida.

These people belonged to the renowned and powerful tribes, which makes it clear beyond doubt that not only the weak but also the strong had become the target of their tortures. Finding out about their migration some of the disbelievers set out chasing them but the ship had already departed for Abyssinia. The believers found peace there with the result that other Muslims followed suit.

A few months after the migration, the Muslims came to know that either the entire Quraish population had turned Muslims or made peace with the believers, and Makkah was no longer a risky spot for them. With this good news, a group of Muslims left for Makkah while others waited to make sure about the truth behind the rumor. Those leaving for Makkah found the news baseless when they arrived at a short distance from Makkah. Thus some of them made a retreat while others entered Makkah under the protection of some influential Makkans. Those who went back to Makkah came into contact with the believers and left again for Abyssinia along with other Muslims. This is known as the Second Migration to Abyssinia, which increased the number of the Muslims there to nearly one hundred.

## **Quraish's demand from the King of Abyssinia**

When the disbelievers noticed that the Makkans after being converted to Islam were leaving for Abyssinia and living there in peace, they feared that their power organized outside of Makkah could, one day, pose a great danger to the Makkans. They dispatched a delegation of two respectable persons Amr bin Al-Âs and Abdullah bin Rabi'ah to Negus, the King of Abyssinia. The Makkans had trade relations with Abyssinia for some time. The delegation was sent with costly gifts for the king and his courtiers. After being permitted into the court, they first presented their gifts and then requested the king to hand over some of their slaves who had come to his country after joining a new faith which was against the faith of their ancestors. The king promised to look into their demands only after investigating the matter. The king then sent for the Muslims to come to his court and inquired about their new faith. On behalf of the Muslims, Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib ﷺ moved forward to explain to Negus the truth about the new faith in a remarkable speech delivered before the king and his courtiers.

## **The Beautiful Speech of Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib ﷺ**

"O King, we were people plunged in ignorance. We worshipped idols, we ate dead animals, and we committed abominations. We broke natural ties, we ill-treated our neighbors and our strong devoured the weak. We lived like this until Allâh the Almighty raised among us a Prophet of whose noble birth and lineage, truthfulness, honesty and purity we all were aware. He invited us to acknowledge the Oneness of Allâh and to worship Him. He enjoined us to speak the truth, to redeem our pledges, to be kind and considerate to our relatives and neighbors. He forbade us every vice, bloodshed, shamelessness, lies and deceit. He asked us not to encroach upon the belongings of our orphans and not to vilify chaste women. He ordered us to offer prayers. We acknowledged the Messenger ﷺ and believed in him. Because of this our people were estranged and they persecuted us.

"So when they tortured us and tormented us under their tyranny, we fled to your country. We have come here, O King, to your country seeking your protection and we do hope that we shall not be dealt with unjustly."

Negus listened patiently to Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib ﷺ. Then he asked him if he had something brought by his Prophet ﷺ from God. Thereupon Ja'far ﷺ recited the opening Verses of *Sûrat Maryam*. Tears started rolling down from the eyes of Negus and his courtiers. The recitation being over, Negus remarked, "This and the Torah of Musa ﷺ are radiations from the same Heavenly Light." Then the envoys of the Quraish flung their last attempt and said, "O King, they are opponents of Jesus too." By this they wanted the Christian king to grow angry at the Muslim migrants. Directly came the reply from Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib ﷺ, "Not at all; the fact is rather: He is slave of Allâh and His Messenger." Negus said: "This belief is correct to the core and the Gospel also means the same."

Negus sent the envoys of the Quraish back empty-handed and refused point-blank to give the Muslims up to them. Along with this he returned their gifts thus rubbing salt in their wounds. This event occurred during the sixth year of the Prophethood. With the ignoble defeat of the Quraish's mission, their ill treatment of the Muslims simply was aggravated.

### **Hamzah ﷺ accepts Islam**

The Quraish were going mad with enmity against the Muslims. Once Abu Jahl happened to pass by the Prophet ﷺ near the mount of Safa. He insulted the Prophet ﷺ and heaped all manners of indignities upon him but the Prophet ﷺ did not answer him back. Then he hit him with a stone, which caused bleeding. The Prophet ﷺ came back home silently. Abu Jahl came back too and sat among his friends beside the Ka'bah. Hamzah bin Abdul-Muttalib was the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ. He loved the Prophet ﷺ very much but was still a disbeliever. He was in the practice of going to the wilderness every morning with his bow and arrows and passing the whole day in hunting and would return only in the evening and go home only after circumambulating the Ka'bah. That fateful day when Hamzah was on

his way back home from the chase, he came across the slave-woman of Abdullah bin Jad'ân who told him about Abu Jahl's abusing and hitting the Prophet ﷺ with a stone and the latter's returning home in perfect silence.

Hamzah besides being the uncle, was also the foster brother of the Prophet ﷺ. This relation of blood and milk sent his temper out of control. He went straight to the Ka'bah, circumambulated it first and then turned back to where Abu Jahl was sitting with his friends. Hamzah was essentially a warrior, the bravest and the most courageous amongst the Quraish. Going straight to Abu Jahl, Hamzah proceeded to strike a blow upon his head causing him to bleed saying, "Would you dare to insult and abuse him if I followed his religion and say what he says?" Abu Jahl's friends got enraged and rose in his support but Abu Jahl pacified them all saying it was he who had crossed the limits. If Hamzah had not taken revenge on me for his nephew, he would have been counted among those bereft of a sense of honor. Abu Jahl was worried that Hamzah might come to the fold of Islam in a fit of anger and antagonism.

When Hamzah returned to the Prophet ﷺ with the news of his taking revenge of him, he remarked: "O uncle, this is not pleasing to me, I would really be pleased if you come into the fold of Islam." Having heard this, Hamzah embraced Islam then and there. The conversion of Amir Hamzah ؓ to Islam invigorated the weak band of believers. This event occurred during the sixth year of the Prophethood. The Quraish now had to be cautious in dealing with the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions.

### Umar bin Khattâb's conversion to Islam

Umar bin Khattâb's acceptance of Islam plunged the Quraish into immense grief and their hostility took a serious turn. Umar bin Khattâb was, like Hamzah bin Abdul-Muttalib ؓ, a well-known wrestler and one of the most famous brave men of Arabia. He played a prominent role in targeting the Muslims because of their new faith. He took hold of a Muslim and kept on thrashing him till he himself became exhausted and resumed the beating after having to take a rest. He tried his level best to bring the Muslims back to the old faith but

miserably failed in this endeavor. Being frustrated to the core he, one day announced in a assembly of the disbelievers his plan to do away with Muhammad ﷺ, the cause of the discord in Arabia.

Having heard about this heinous plan, Abu Jahl encouraged him by offering one hundred camels and one thousand *Uqiyah* (about 125 kilograms) of silver if the task was accomplished. In this state he came out with unsheathed sword in his hand in search of Muhammad ﷺ. "Where are you going in this manner?" Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs asked Umar. "I am going to assassinate Muhammad today so that the calamity that has overtaken the Makkans is not experienced anymore." "Do you not fear the retaliation of Banu Hâshim?" Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ❀ pleaded with Umar bin Khattâb. "So far as there is a sword in my hand I fear none." Umar bin Khattâb retorted and added, "As you appear to be a staunch supporter of Muhammad, let me kill you first." Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ❀ replied, "Take care of your own household first before killing Muhammad and me, for your sister has already embraced Islam."

Hearing this sarcastic reply, Umar turned mad with rage and proceeded straight towards the house of his sister. His turning towards the house of his sister was, in fact, his turning to Islam. Khabbâb bin Al-Aratt ❀ was then giving Fâtimah ❀, the sister of Umar bin Khattâb and Saeed bin Zaid ❀, her husband, lessons in the Qur'ân.

Having heard the footsteps, Khabbâb ❀ hid somewhere in the house along with the written pages of the Qur'ân. "What were you all reading?" Umar inquired in a fit of anger and grappled with his brother-in-law beating him mercilessly. When his sister intervened to save her husband, Umar hit her too making her bleed. Thereupon she mustered courage enough to throw a challenge to Umar saying "Umar; We have become Muslims and have been obeying Muhammad ﷺ, so do whatever you want."

On this courageous reply, Umar looked towards the bleeding face of his sister and his heart was moved at the pathetic sight, with the result that his furious storm subsided to a great extent. Umar then asked his sister to show him what they were reading. Since Umar was

talking sense, his sister dared to ask him to take a bath first before touching the Scripture. Umar took a bath and then went through the 'Words of Allāh only to admit with fervor:

"What sweet words these are, I am feeling the impression on my heart."

Having heard this, Khabbāb ؓ came out from his hiding and said, "Congratulations, O Umar! The prayer of Muhammad ﷺ has been accepted, for I have heard the Prophet ﷺ invoking Allāh: 'O Allāh! Convert to Islam either Umar bin Khattāb or Abu Jahl bin Hishām.'" Then Khabbāb ؓ read out the first *Ruku'* of *Sūrat Tā-Hā*. Umar upon hearing the Verses of the Qur'ān, started weeping emotionally. Following this, Umar demanded from Khabbāb ؓ to take him to the Prophet ﷺ. Umar still had the unsheathed sword in his hand but his purpose was changed.

Umar knocked at the door of the house of Arqam. Since he had an unsheathed sword in his hand, the Companions were reluctant to open the door. But the Prophet ﷺ asked them to throw the door open. Hamzah ؓ encouraged them saying, "Let him in. If he has good intentions it is better, otherwise he will be beheaded with his own sword."

As Umar stepped in, the Prophet ﷺ moved forward and said seizing his cloak rather violently: "Will you not leave your path?" Umar answered: "O Messenger of Allāh! I have come to embrace Islam." As the Prophet ﷺ heard this, he raised the cry of *Allāhu Akbar*, and his Companions joined him so loudly that it resounded through the hills of Makkah.

Islam was immensely strengthened with Hamzah and Umar ؓ marching to the path of Islam one after another. After converting to Islam, Umar bin Khattāb ؓ proceeded straight to the house of Abu Jahl and knocked at his door. He came out and fervently greeted Umar bin Khattāb ؓ and said, "What for have you come?" Umar ؓ replied, "By the grace of Allāh, I have embraced Islam and I now believe in Muhammad ﷺ as the Messenger of Allāh." Hearing this Abu Jahl shut his door in rage and went in. Umar ؓ also came back. He meant by it to break this news to the greatest enemy of Islam.



Umar bin Khattāb ۞ soon after believing in Allāh and His Messenger, suggested to the Prophet ۞: "We need not pray to Allāh secretly in houses, we should do it publicly at the Ka'bah." Umar bin Khattāb ۞ fought back anyone who stood against it. Now the Muslims made it a practice to perform their prayers at the Ka'bah and Islam made its presence felt open and above board. This event took place at the end of the last month of the sixth year of Prophethood. Umar bin Khattāb ۞ was then 33 years of age. With his conversion to Islam the number of Muslims in Makkah reached 40.

### **Social Boycott**

Umar's coming to the fold of Islam plunged the Makkan disbelievers into profound grief. The believers began to perform their prayers openly at the Ka'bah, while a substantial number of the converts had been in peace in Abyssinia. The Quraish were rendered helpless and they had no way within their power to ward off the lurking menace. Now they went into fresh consultations and discussed ways and means to combat the challenge.

They came up with a plan to see Abu Tālib and ask him to hand over his nephew to them. In case of his refusal they decided to impose a complete social and material boycott on Banu Hāshim and Banu Abdul-Muttalib, who were lending their unrelenting support to the new faith. They reached an agreement that they would sever all relations with these two tribes and none among them would meet the Muslims, talk with them and establish marital relations with any of them. Moreover, they decided to see that no food reached them from any quarter. They also agreed that the boycott would be kept in force until they handed over Muhammad ۞ to them.

They put their agreement in writing with the initials of all the notables of the Quraish and hung it on the Ka'bah, this gave added impact to the agreement. Abu Tālib, along with the Banu Hāshim and Banu Abdul-Muttalib, deserted their homes and went into the hills of Makkah to stay there. All the Muslims followed them to the pass called Shi'b Abu Tālib. Abu Lahab was the only man of Banu Hāshim who sided with the disbelievers. The food that Banu Hāshim brought with them ran short and they had to live in a state of near starvation.

Three years elapsed with untold sufferings forced upon the Muslims. The inhuman persecution endured by them was awe-inspiring. These besieged people would come out during the days of *Hajj* and would buy food and other things they needed. The Prophet ﷺ would also come out in the months of peace and in this atmosphere would preach Islam among the people from outside Makkah. But the Quraish followed him everywhere holding people back from listening to him and branding him as insane and a sorcerer.

The three-year exile of the Muslims to Shi'b Abu Tālib proves beyond doubt that the sense of honor of the tribes and considerations for race and lineage had substantial value and importance. It was this fact that forced even the disbelieving section of Banu Hāshim to extend their unflinching support to the Prophet ﷺ. This miserable period of exile spanning over three years also proved a blessing in disguise. They all became very close to the Prophet ﷺ even the disbelieving group had a real chance of observing the life and activities, conduct and character of one who had nothing but the message of truth, love and righteousness. They watched him directly and came into direct contact with his Divine mission. Three years of inhuman treatment meted out to Banu Hāshim stirred some Quraish individuals from within.

The Quraish of Makkah could easily assess the pathetic situation when the babies of Banu Hāshim were heard crying in front of their starving parents due to lack of food. Zuhair bin Abu Umayyah bin Mughirah was the first to assess the gravity of the sufferings because Abu Tālib happened to be his maternal uncle. Zuhair drew first the attention of Mut'im bin Adi bin Naufal bin Abdu Manāf on the grounds of relationship to the miseries borne by Banu Hāshim and persuaded him to break the agreement. He then brought Abul-Bukhtari bin Hishām and Zam'ah bin Al-Aswad round to his plan. A number of persons rose in favor of abrogating the agreement in view of their close relations with Banu Hāshim.

In the meantime, the Prophet ﷺ conveyed to Abu Tālib that he was informed by Allāh the Almighty that the document bearing the agreement had been eaten by the termites except the word "Allāh" where ever it was mentioned. Hearing this, Abu Tālib came out of the pass and informed the Quraish that Muhammad ﷺ had told him such

and such. He then asked them to see the document and in case it was destroyed, the boycott should also be called off. The disbelievers were dismayed when they found that termites had already eaten up the document except the spots that mentioned the Name of Allāh. They were all deeply bewildered and announced the end of boycott then and there.

Banu Hāshim and all the Muslims came out from Shi'b Abu Tālib after three years and began to live in their deserted houses. They had lived in Shi'b Abu Tālib a life of acute depravation which forced them at times to eat the leaves of trees. If they found a dry skin, they would roast and eat it. Hakim bin Hizām would, sometimes, secretly send by his slave some food to his father's sister Khadijah ؓ. Once it came to the notice of Abu Jahl, he snatched it from the slave and tightened his vigil on them.

### **The Year of Sorrow**

When the Prophet ؐ emerged from Shi'b Abu Tālib, the tenth year of Prophethood had started. Instead of showing politeness, the Quraish appeared to be more atrocious. Moreover, some events also took place in this year that it came to be called the Year of Sorrow among the Muslims. During the month of Rajab, Abu Talib fell seriously ill and died at the age of eighty. The death of Abu Talib was encouraging to the hostile Makkans. Abu Talib was the only person who was held in esteem and awe by one and all and with his death, the strength and honor of Banu Hāshim eroded to a great extent. It was a golden opportunity for the mischievous Quraish to create trouble and commit atrocities more openly and fearlessly.

The same year Abu Bakr ؓ also decided to migrate for the cruelties of the Quraish had taken a turn beyond endurance. He had reached Bark Al-Ghimād when he came across Ibn Daghinah, the chieftain of the Qārah tribe. On being asked about his departure Abu Bakr ؓ told him that he had been tortured by his people to such an extent that he was forced to leave Makkah to settle somewhere else so that he could pray to Allāh peacefully. Ibn Daghinah said, "You are a man that neither yourself nor the people should let you go from Makkah. You better come back and worship your Lord in Makkah." Thus Abu Bakr

ﷺ returned to Makkah. Ibn Daghinah assembled the notables of the Quraish and put them to utter shame for driving out a man with such high qualities. Abu Bakr ﷺ built in his courtyard a platform for performing prayer where he began to recite the Qur'ân and offer prayers. His loud recitation would leave its impression on the hearts and minds of the women and children of neighborhood. Obviously, the Quraish could not remain silent over this lurking danger. Ibn Daghinah forbade him but Abu Bakr ﷺ boldly answered back, "I abandon your protection now and go to the shelter of Allâh the Almighty instead of giving up the recitation of the Qur'ân."

Two months after the demise of Abu Tâlib, Khadijah ﷺ the wife of the Prophet ﷺ also passed away in the tenth year of his Prophethood. The Prophet ﷺ loved her very much. She was his companion through all his troubles and suffering. She was the first to believe in him. She always encouraged him and consoled him to keep patience. Abu Tâlib and Khadijah ﷺ were such staunch supports that their constant encouragement kept the Prophet ﷺ moving forward with his mission. Their final departure made him sad. He was plunged into frustration also because the atrocities of the disbelievers had taken a turn for the worse.

Once he ﷺ was passing through a place where some scoundrels threw mud on his head with the result that his hair, body and garments were polluted. He came back home in the same pitiable plight. His daughter, Fâtimah Zuhrah ﷺ washed him weeping bitterly. Thereupon the Prophet ﷺ consoled her saying, "Weep not my daughter! Allâh the Almighty will Himself protect your father."

Once the Prophet ﷺ went to the Ka'bah where the polytheists were sitting. Abu Jahl passed a sarcastic remark, "O Abd Manâf, look your Prophet has come." Utbah bin Rabi'ah quipped, "Who are we to reject if one claims to be a Prophet or an angel?" The Prophet ﷺ turned to Utbah and said, "You never lent support to the cause of Allâh and His Messenger and remained insolently persistent in your stand." While addressing Abu Jahl he ﷺ remarked, "The time is drawing near when you will laugh less and weep more." Then he told all the pagans, "The time is nearing when you will enter into the faith you are rejecting now."

## The Journey to Tā'if

The stubbornness of Quraish continued to increase. During the very period of Shi'b Abu Tālib, the Prophet ﷺ had started preaching Islam among the people arriving in Makkah from outside during the *Hajj* season. But these efforts did not bear fruit. He decided to call the people of Tā'if to Islam. Tā'if is at a distance of 60 miles from Makkah and was as big a city as Makkah. It was inhabited by Banu Tha'if who worshipped Lāt. In Tā'if there was a temple of Lāt, which was the center of attraction for the whole of the city. In the month of Shawwāl, the 10th year of Prophethood, one month after the death of Khadijah رضي الله عنها, the Prophet ﷺ took Zaid bin Hārithah and left for Tā'if on foot.

In route to Tā'if he first contacted the Banu Bakr tribe. When they too behaved like the Makkans, he went to the Qahtān people but they were also similar to the Quraish. At last he ﷺ reached Tā'if and made his first contacts with men of status. Among the chieftains of Tā'if, Abd Yālil bin Amr bin Umair and his two brothers, Mas'ud and Habib were the most influential. The Prophet ﷺ met all three and invited them to Islam. They were very haughty. One of them retorted: "Had God made you His Prophet you would not have been walking about like this." Another one quipped: "Did God find none to send as Prophet other than you?"

"And they said: why is not this Qur'ān sent down to some great man of the two towns." (43:31)

The third one pleaded: "I don't like to have a talk with you, for if you are true to your word in being the Messenger of God, it is risky to reject it; if you are lying about God, you are not fit to be talked with."

## **Obstinate Behavior of the People of Tā'if:**

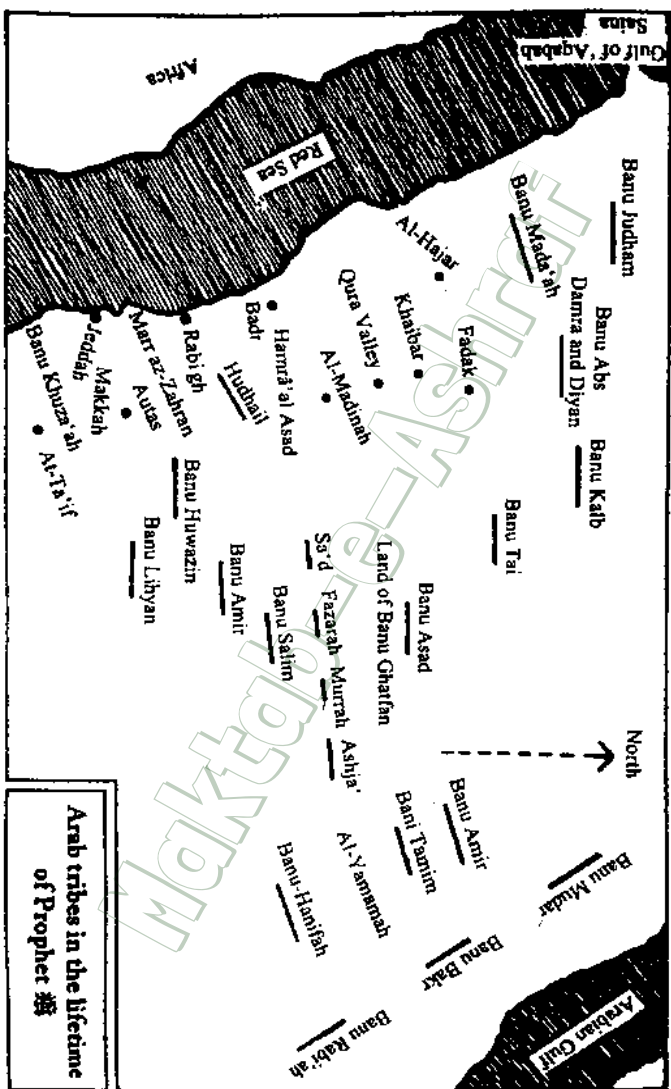
When the Prophet ﷺ met with failure in the case of Abd Yālil and his brothers, he ﷺ asked them to keep what came to pass between them a secret. He then left to contact others but Abd Yālil and his brothers stirred up their slaves and some rabble of the town to harass the Prophet ﷺ. The riffraff of Tā'if followed the Prophet ﷺ, abusing, screaming, and throwing stones at him until he left Tā'if but they kept following him. When the

shower of stones hit his shins, they bleed profusely. At a distance of three miles from Tâ'if, there was an orchard of Utbah bin Rabi'ah, a wealthy man of Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ took refuge in it. Sitting under the shade of a wall he invoked Allāh the Almighty saying, "O Allāh! You are the Protector and Caretaker of the weak and the helpless and I seek Your help alone."

Utbah bin Rabi'ah was present in his orchard at that time. Arabian nobility and the sense of hospitality pressed him to send through his slave Addās a bunch of grapes on a plate. The slave was a Christian from Nainua (Nineveh). The Prophet ﷺ ate from the grapes and invited Addās to accept Islam. He was impressed and kissed the Prophet's hands. Utbah was watching all this. When Addās returned, Utbah said to him, "Accept not what he says, for his religion was better than that of his (Prophet's)." The Prophet ﷺ took a rest in the orchard for a while and then left. From there he arrived at Nakhlah and passed his night in a date grove. Some of the leaders of the jinn heard him recite the Qur'ān and believed in him.

### Back to Makkah:

On his return, the Prophet ﷺ came up to the mount of Hira and sent his message to the chieftains of the Quraish but none showed his readiness to give him refuge. When his message came to Mut'im bin Adi, in spite of being a polytheist, he got up overwhelmed with the sense of national honor and came to the mount of Hira. He took the Prophet ﷺ with him and they went to Makkah. The sons of Mut'im stood in front of the Ka'bah with unsheathed swords. In this way the Prophet ﷺ went around the Ka'bah. Thereafter, Mut'im and his sons accompanied him to his house under the shadow of their swords. "What's your relation with Muhammad?" the Quraish asked Mut'im. He replied, "I have no relation with Muhammad. I am simply his supporter, and nobody can dare look at him with evil eyes while he enjoys my support." Such staunch support from Mut'im silenced the Quraish. As per one narrative, an angel came to the Prophet ﷺ in Tâ'if and said, "If you order me I would join together the two hills between which Tâ'if is located." But he ﷺ replied, "No, if they fail to accept Islam, their progeny will do it."



Arab tribes in the lifetime  
of Prophet ﷺ

## **Marriage with 'Āishah ؓ, and Mi'raj**

The same year in Shawwal, the 10th year of Prophethood, the Prophet ﷺ married Saudah bint Zam'ah ؓ and Āishah bint Abu Bakr ؓ, and he was also honored with the *Mi'raj* (the Night Journey and his Ascension to the heavens). Scholars are in disagreement regarding the year of the Ascension and some of them are of the opinion that it took place more than once. But this is not the place to discuss the issue in great detail.

## **Preaching Islam in Different Places and Tribes**

Being fed up with the Makkans, the Prophet ﷺ undertook a journey to Tā'if but they proved worse than the Makkans. The Makkans ill treatment of the Muslims was multiplying day by day. But he ﷺ did not lose his courage or determination. Back from Tā'if he resumed his duty of preaching to the tribes which stayed around Makkah during the *Hajj* days.

He contacted Banu Kindah and Banu Abdullah tribes at their dwellings. To Banu Abdullah he said, "O Banu Abdullah! Your father was Abdullah (literally the slave of Allāh)! You too should become the slaves of Allāh". He ﷺ also went to the settlement of Banu Hanifah tribe but they meted out treatment worst than ever.

He ﷺ continued preaching Islam among the caravans from outside Makkah during the *Hajj* season. But Abu Lahab was very keen on interrupting the preaching mission and calling the people not to pay heed to what the Prophet ﷺ would say. He ﷺ invited Banu Āmir, Banu Shaibān, Banu Kalb, Banu Muhārib, Fazārah, Ghassān, Sulāim, Abs, Hārith, Adhrah, Dhuhl, and Murrah tribes to accept Islam.

On contacting Banu Āmir, a man named Firās said, "In case we accept Islam and you attain power, will you then appoint me your successor after you?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "This is within the Power of Allāh the Almighty Alone that He choose somebody to succeed me." Hearing this he said, "Wonderful! At present we lay down our lives for your mission, and upon your big victories others plunge in to enjoy the fruits of power! Go away, I want nothing to do with you."



## **Suwaïd bin Sâmit**

During the 11th year of Prophethood, from the tribe of Aus, a man named Suwaïd bin Sâmit from Al-Madinah came across the Prophet ﷺ and the latter invited him to accept Islam. He said, "You perhaps, have something which I too have with me." The Prophet ﷺ said, "What do you possess at all?" He replied, "The Wisdom of Luqmân." He ﷺ said, "Let me know it." He recited some verses and the Prophet ﷺ appreciated it as a good saying, "But I have the Glorious Qur'ân, which is far better in virtue and excellence and it is perfect in light and guidance." He then recited a few Verses from the Qur'ân. He readily admitted that it was certainly the epitome of light and guidance. As per some narratives, he embraced Islam while others deny it. However, he held himself back from opposing the Prophet ﷺ from that day on. He went back to Al-Madinah and was killed in a battle fought between the Aus and the Khazraj tribes.

## **Iyâs bin Mu'âdh**

During these days Anas bin Râfi', accompanied by some persons of his tribe Banu Abdul-Ashhal, came to Makkah to strike an agreement with the Quraish against the Khazraj. As the Prophet ﷺ came to know of his arrival, he quickly went to him before he was able to meet the chieftains of the Quraish to tell him about the issue in view. He ﷺ at once said to them, "I have something with me that is very beneficial for you all; I can let you know it if you so desire." They said in one voice, "Very well, tell us what it is all about." Thereupon he ﷺ said, "I have been sent as the Messenger of Allâh for the guidance of the people. I forbid one and all to practice polytheism and ask you to worship Allâh Alone. Allâh has sent down His Book to me." Following this he taught them a few basic tenets of Islam and read out some Verses from the Glorious Qur'ân. Iyâs bin Mu'âdh, a young fellow in the delegation of Anas bin Râfi' listened to the Prophet ﷺ and his recitation from the Qur'ân with rapt attention, and impatiently said, "O my people! This is far better than that for which you have come from Al-Madinah." Anas bin Râfi', the leader of the delegation rebuked Iyâs bin Mu'âdh and said, "We have not come here for this." Iyâs kept quiet, and the Prophet ﷺ left

the place silently. The delegation from Al-Madinah also met with utter failure and no agreement with the Quraish could be finalized. A few days after reaching Al-Madinah, Iyâs bin Mu'âdh passed away declaring his faith in Islam.

### **Dimâd Azdi**

Dimâd Azdi was a noted sorcerer and citizen of Yemen. Once he came to Makkah and came to know from Quraish that Muhammad ﷺ was possessed by jinn. He claimed that he would cure him through his incantation. Then he came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "I want to recite my incantation for you." Thereupon he ﷺ said, "Take from me first and you will recite afterwards." Then he ﷺ recited the following:

"Verily all praise is for Allâh, we praise Him and we seek His help. Whomsoever Allâh guides, none can misguide; and whomsoever Allâh misguides, none can guide. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allâh Alone, having no partner; and I bear witness that Muhammad is his slave and His Messenger. Then after,..."

He ﷺ had uttered this much that Dimâd lost control over himself and exclaimed, "Repeat these words." He made the Prophet ﷺ repeat these words several times before he said, "I have heard from soothsayers, sorcerers and poets their words but such words of such a comprehensive and exhaustive nature I have never come across." Saying this he entreated the Prophet ﷺ, "Please stretch out your hand, I embrace Islam right now."

### **Tufail bin Amr Dausi** ﷺ

The Daus tribe belonged to Yemen and its chief Tufail bin Amr was reckoned among the richest men of Yemen. Besides being an intellectual he was also a great poet. The same year, the 11th year of Prophethood, he came to Makkah. The chieftains of Makkah came out to greet him and brought him into Makkah with high honors. The Quraish were, however, anxious about his possible meeting with the Prophet ﷺ and his being charmed by the latter. Thus, with the entry of Tufail to the town, they told him that there was a sorcerer in the

town who had brought calamities to the people and separated father from son, son from father, brother from brother and husband from wife. So, he must be careful against any word of his coming to his (Tufail's) ears.

One early morning, Tufail reached the Ka'bah with his ears stuffed with cotton. The Prophet ﷺ was then offering the *Fajr* (Dawn) prayer. The way of offering the prayer charmed Tufail and he gradually drew nearer. He happened to hear something from the Prophet's recitation of the Qur'ân. Tufail relates: "I thought, I am also a poet and a wise person and nothing in a speech can elude me. If it is good, I shall accept it; if bad, I shall reject it. With this thought I threw out the pieces of cotton from my ears." Tufail then followed the Prophet ﷺ up to his dwelling and asked him to let him know what he kept saying. The Prophet ﷺ read out some Verses from the Qur'ân and Tufail embraced Islam then and there. He then entreated the Prophet: "Invoke Allâh to favor my whole tribe with Islam through me." Tufail came home and embarked on his mission of inviting his people to accept Islam. He also requested the Prophet ﷺ to accompany him and escape the torture of the Makkans. The Prophet ﷺ replied, "I shall migrate on the Order of Allâh the Almighty and to the place enjoined by Him."

### **Abu D'har Ghifâri** ﷺ

Abu Dhar Ghifâri belonged to Banu Ghifâr and lived in the suburbs of Al-Madinah. News about the Messenger ﷺ reached Al-Madinah through Suwaid bin Sâmit and Iyâs bin Mu'âdh, and when Abu Dhar Ghifâri overheard it he sent his brother Unais, who was also a poet, to find out the facts. Unais met the Prophet ﷺ and reported to Abu Dhar Ghifâri in Al-Madinah that he came across such a person who taught to follow the good and shun the evil. Abu Dhar was not satisfied with this much. So, he left Al-Madinah for Makkah on foot and embraced Islam after presenting himself to the Prophet ﷺ. From there he went straight to the Ka'bah and recited the word of *Tauhid* and some Verses of the Qur'ân at the top of his voice, with the result that he was surrounded by the Quraish on all sides and beaten to unconsciousness. They were about to kill him when Abbâs, who was

still a disbeliever, passed by. He revealed that the victim was a man from the Ghifār tribe where they brought dates for trading. Hearing this they left him. The next day, Abu Dhar ؓ raised again the word of *Tauhid* loudly and was again beaten mercilessly. Later on he returned back to Al-Madinah.

## Six Fortunate Souls of Yathrib

It was the last month of the 11th year of Prophethood and the bloody battle between Aus and Khazraj had come to an end after taking a heavy toll of noted chiefs from both sides. Caravans from outside had begun to come into Makkah to perform the *Hajj* rites, and the Prophet ﷺ had started contacting people and preaching Islam among them at their places. Abu Jahl and Abu Lahab followed the Prophet ﷺ forbidding people to give their ears to what he had to say. He, in order to be safe from their mischief, would come out in the darkness of night to contact the caravans staying at a distance of several miles from the Ka'bah.

Once, at a distance of few miles from Makkah, he heard some people talking during night at Aqabah. He came close and saw that they were six in all who had come from Yathrib to perform the *Hajj* and that they were all from Khazraj. The Prophet ﷺ preached Islam and read out a few Verses from the Qur'ān. They listened with rapt attention; they looked at each other and embraced Islam on the spot.

The entire population of Yathrib was divided between the Jews and the idolaters. The Aus and the Khazraj were the two well-known and mighty tribes of the idolaters and they continually heard from the Jews about the rising of a grand Prophet in the immediate future, and also about his dominance over all others. Since they had already heard about it, they lost no time in accepting Islam.

Those six persons were Abu Umāmah As'ad bin Zurārah (who was from Banu Najjār and a relative of the Prophet ﷺ, and was the first to embrace Islam), Auf bin Hārith, Rāfi' bin Mālik, Qutbah bin Āmir, Jābir bin Abdullah, Uqbah bin Āmir bin Nābi ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ gave Rāfi bin Mālik ؓ in written form the portion from the Qur'ān already revealed. The small band of believers left for Al-Madinah with the

sincere promise to preach Islam among their people. They set to translate their promise into action immediately after reaching Al-Madinah and Al-Madinah heard the echo of Islam everywhere.

### **First Pledge of Aqabah**

The 12th year of Prophethood had set in. The Quraish were still adamant in their hostility. This whole year passed in a mixed state of hope and fear for the Prophet ﷺ as he did not know about the missionary activities of the six persons who had gone back to Al-Madinah with the promise of preaching Islam among their people. At last, the Prophet ﷺ went to the same place of Aqabah during the next *Hajj* season in search of those persons who had taken the pledge to preach Islam in Al-Madinah the previous year.

All of a sudden, he noticed them along with some new faces belonging both to the Aus and the Khazraj. Those twelve persons were: Abu Umamah, Auf bin Hârith bin Rifâ'ah, Râfi bin Mâlik bin Al-Ajlân, Qutbah bin Âmir bin Hadbah and Uqbah bin Âmir ﷺ. These five persons belonged to the group, which had accepted Islam the previous year. The other seven persons were: Mu'âdh bin Hârith—the brother of Auf bin Hârith, Dhakwân bin Abd Qais bin Khâlid, Khâlid bin Mukhallad bin Âmir bin Zuraiq, Ubâdah bin Sâmî bin Qais (from Junaib tribe), Abbâs bin Ubâdah bin Nadlah ﷺ. These ten persons were from the Khazraj tribe, Abul-Haitham bin At-Taihân ﷺ (from Banu Abdul-Ashhal) and Uwaim bin Sâ'idah ﷺ, the last two were from the Aus tribe.

These twelve persons pledged their allegiance to Islam at the hand of the Prophet ﷺ. While departing they requested the Prophet ﷺ to dispatch along with them a preacher, and Mus'ab bin Umair ﷺ was made in charge of the mission. He arrived at Al-Madinah and stayed at the house of As'ad bin Zurârah ﷺ and made it his preaching center. During the first pledge of Aqabah, the Prophet ﷺ had asked them to confess the following:

- 1) We shall worship one God associating none with Him.
- 2) We shall not go near stealing and adultery.
- 3) We shall not kill our daughters.

- 4) We shall vilify none.
- 5) We shall not backbite
- 6) We shall obey the Prophet ﷺ in every thing good.

### Success of Mus'ab bin Umair ﷺ in Al-Madinah

Mus'ab bin Umair ﷺ devoted his all-out efforts to preaching Islam in Al-Madinah. By the Grace of Allāh, tribe after tribe in Al-Madinah came into the fold of Islam. From the branches of the Aus in Al-Madinah, Banu Abdul-Ashhal and Banu Zafar clans were very renowned and strong. Sa'd bin Mu'adh was, besides being the chieftain of Banu Abdul-Ashhal, the commander of all the clans. Usaid bin Hudhair was the chieftain of Banu Zafar clan. His father was the commander of all the clans in the battle of Bu'ath and was killed in the same battle. As'ad bin Zurarah ﷺ in whose house Mus'ab bin Umair ﷺ was staying was the cousin of Sa'd bin Mu'adh. Once Mus'ab bin Umair ﷺ was sitting by the well of Banu Abdul-Ashhal and was in conversation with As'ad bin Zurarah ﷺ. Sa'd bin Mu'adh did not like their preaching of Islam in his locality. Sa'd called Usaid bin Hudhair and asked him to tell them in strong words not to come into their locality from then on. Usaid moved towards them with his sword and reproached both As'ad and Mus'ab ﷺ. "There is no harm if you please sit down and listen to what I say; you are at liberty to decide after that." Usaid sat down saying, "Very well." Mus'ab then expounded Islam to him and recited the Qur'ān. Usaid kept listening silently. When Mus'ab bin Umair finished, Usaid bin Hudhair said, "I accept Islam." Usaid ﷺ then said, "There is one man that if he becomes a Muslim, there would be none to oppose you." I'll send him to you at once. "Thus Usaid ﷺ came back to Sa'd bin Mu'adh who was waiting for Usaid ﷺ. "What did you say to them?" Sa'd inquired. Usaid ﷺ said, "They have promised not to do anything against your will. But a new incident took place there. A few young men of Banu Hārithah came in and they wanted to kill As'ad bin Zurarah." Hearing this Sa'd bin Mu'adh stood up with his sword and reached the spot. He saw both As'ad and Mus'ab ﷺ sitting there peacefully. Sa'd fell in doubt about his being sent to them under false pretenses. With this thought entering his mind he began to abuse

them and told As'ad ؓ that he had considerations for relations otherwise he could not have dared come to the locality to preach Islam. Mus'ab ؓ said, "Please sit down and accept what I say or reject it outright." Sa'd laid down his sword and sat before them. Mus'ab ؓ told him what he had already stated before to Usaid ؓ and Sa'd too embraced Islam then and there. On return he assembled the people of his clan and said, "What's your opinion about me?" They said as one man, "You are our chief and your opinion has always been worth practicing." Thereupon Sa'd ؓ said, "I have nothing to do with you unless you all accept Islam." Having heard this, the entire Banu Abdul-Ashhal accepted Islam.

Thus Islam kept spreading among other tribes and clans of Al-Madinah. It was the 13th year of Prophethood. On one hand, Mus'ab bin Umair ؓ was achieving successes one after another and the tortures of Quraish were crossing all limits on the other. In Dhul-Hijjah, in the 13th year of Prophethood, Mus'ab bin Umair ؓ set out to Makkah with a caravan of 72 men and 2 women of Al-Madinah. They were sent with the twin purpose of seeing the Prophet ﷺ and to invite him to come to Al-Madinah.

## **Second Pledge of Aqabah**

The Prophet ﷺ had already been informed of the arrival of this caravan. He came out in the night, took his uncle Abbās bin Abdul-Muttalib with him and reached the mountain pass of Aqabah. The caravan of believers from Al-Madinah was waiting for him. The caravan also had comprised some disbelievers with it as well. The polytheists from Al-Madinah were unaware of that fateful meeting and they were sleeping in their dwellings. When the people of Al-Madinah expressed their desire to take the Prophet ﷺ to Al-Madinah, Abbās rose to say:

"O the people of Al-Madinah: Muhammad ﷺ is at present under the protection of his family. Since you want to take him with you, keep in mind, you are alone responsible for his safety and security. But his protection is not easy. Take him with you if you are ready for a series of bloody fights, otherwise abandon such a yearning right now."

Bara' bin Ma'rur ﷺ rose to answer and said, "Abbās! we listened to what you said. Now we want the Prophet ﷺ also to say something." Thereupon he ﷺ recited some Verses of the Qur'ān and then brought home the rights of Allāh and His slaves and the responsibilities to be thrust upon them on taking him to Al-Madinah. Having heard the speech of the Prophet ﷺ, Bara' bin Ma'rur ﷺ said, "We are prepared for all eventualities." Following this, Abul-Haitham bin Taihān ﷺ said, "You please promise that you will not come back leaving us in Al-Madinah." The Prophet ﷺ said, "I shall live and die with you." At this, Abdullah bin Rawāhah ﷺ said, "O Prophet of Allāh! What shall we get in return?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Heaven and the pleasure of Allāh!" Abdullah ﷺ said, "Now the bargain is settled. There will be no going back on both sides." In the wake of this, all of them took the oath of allegiance and Bara' bin Ma'rur ﷺ was first. This is called the Second Pledge of Aqabah. After the agreement was finalized, As'ad bin Zurārah ﷺ said addressing everyone, "O people! Bear in mind this mutual agreement implies that we are prepared to face the entire world." All of them said, "Yes, we know very well that we will have to confront the entire world." At the end, the Prophet ﷺ chose twelve persons from among them and appointed them his proclaimers with the duty of preaching Islam. The twelve are listed below:

(1) As'ad bin Zurārah, (2) Usaid bin Hudair, (3) Abul-Haitham bin Al-Taihān, (4) Bara' bin Ma'rur, (5) Abdullah bin Rawāhah, (6) Ubādah bin Sāmit, (7) Sa'd bin Rabi', (8) Sa'd bin Ubādah, (9) Rāfi' bin Mālik, (10) Abdullah bin Amr, (11) Sa'd bin Kaithamah, and (12) Mundhir bin Amr ﷺ.

Among these twelve chieftains, nine belonged to the Khazraj tribe and three to the Aus. Addressing them, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Like the partisans of Jesus ʿĪsā, I assign you the responsibilities of educating your people and I hold responsibility for you all." At the time the pledge of Aqabah was taking its final form, a satan from the top of the mountain cried loudly: "O Makkans! Behold, Muhammad and his party are holding consultations against you." He and his party of believers paid no heed to this call. When everything was finalized, the Prophet ﷺ left the issue of migrating to Al-Madinah to the permission



from Allāh the Almighty. Thereafter, they left the place in ones and twos so that secrecy could be maintained. The Prophet ﷺ and Abbās bin Abdul-Muttalib came to Makkah but the very next morning the Quraish were informed of the meeting that took place the night before. They hurried to the residence of the people from Al-Madinah and said, "Did Muhammad visit you last night?" The non-Muslims or idolaters among them were themselves unaware of such an assembly that was held the previous night.

Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salul was one of them who later on became the head of the hypocrites, he retorted, "How can it be that the people of Al-Madinah finalized any deal without my knowledge?" Thus the doubt in the mind of the Quraish was dispelled and they left. The same moment the people from Al-Madinah started preparations for their return journey and left for their destination. The Quraish came to know of the event later through some other sources and they came out again armed with their weapons. But, by then, the caravan had already traveled a long distance.

Sa'd bin Ubādah and Mundhir bin Amr ۞ were left behind for certain reasons. Mundhir ۞ fled away but Sa'd bin Ubādah ۞ was captured by the Quraish and they took him to Makkah beating him mercilessly. Sa'd bin Ubādah ۞ relates, "When the Quraish were thrashing me relentlessly, a red and white complexioned man appeared coming towards me and I thought he was the man among the whole lot to treat me gracefully. But he slapped me violently dispelling my hope of any good from those people. Meanwhile, another person came on the scene and said, 'Are you acquainted with anyone from the Quraish?' I replied, 'I know Jubair bin Mut'im and Hārith bin Umayyah, the grandsons of Abd Manāf.' He said, 'Why don't you call them by their names?' Telling me this much he left to contact those two persons and said to them, 'A man from Khazraj tribe is being beaten and he is calling you for help.' They said, 'What's his name?' He said, 'Sa'd bin Ubādah.' They said, 'We are obliged to him, for we go to him with business and stay under his protection.' Thus both of them came and got me out of their clutches. Soon after being set free, I left for Al-Madinah (Yathrib)." A long time before the Prophet ﷺ was told by Allāh the Almighty that he would have to

emigrate. He was shown in a dream where he was destined to go. He had dreamt that it was a land of date palm trees. The dream led him to think it might be Yamâmah, for it too had a large number of date trees.

## **General Permission to migrate to Al-Madinah**

After the second pledge of Aqabah, the persecution of the Quraish knew no bounds. Their hostility can be gauged from the following single event. When the Prophet ﷺ, at the height of the atrocities, gave the Muslims general permission to migrate from Makkah to Al-Madinah in order to save their lives, they set out towards Al-Madinah deserting their houses and leaving their relatives, the Quraish could not put up with this provocative development. They began to put up obstructions of many kinds in the way of the migrating Muslims so that they could not live in peace and worship one God in Al-Madinah.

Umm Salamah ؓ relates: "When Abu Salamah had made up his mind to set out to Al-Madinah he saddled his camel and mounted me on it with my son Salamah. Then taking hold of the camel's halter, he went ahead. When some of the men belonging to our clan saw him, they came near us saying, 'It is all right so far as you are concerned, but how can we allow our daughter to go with you.' Meanwhile the clansmen of Abu Salamah came in and said, 'If she does not go, we will not let our son go with her.' Thus Banu Abdul-Asad took my child away." And Banu Mughirah returned with Umm Salamah ؓ, with the result that Abu Salamah ؓ was left alone for Al-Madinah. Umm Salamah ؓ was separated from her husband and son, while Abu Salamah ؓ received the recompense for migrating without his wife and son.

When Suhaib ؓ tried to leave for Al-Madinah, the disbelieving Quraish said to him, "You came to us as a destitute beggar and have grown rich among us, and now you want to go away safely with your life and wealth." So they snatched all his possessions and allowed him to leave for Al-Madinah. When Hishâm bin Âs ؓ decided to migrate, the disbelievers caught and put him in captivity and tortured him. Aiyâsh ؓ migrated to Al-Madinah but Abu Jahl followed him and deceitfully brought him back to Makkah and made him a captive.

In short, despite these impediments, the believers kept migrating to Al-Madinah one or two at a time. All these migrants were the guests of the Muslims in Al-Madinah. Migrating Muslims were called the *Muhājirin* and their helpers in Al-Madinah were known as the *Ansār*. The 14th year of Prophethood had started. Muhammad ﷺ, Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and Ali bin Abu Tālib ؓ and their wives and children were yet to migrate, along with some others who were weak and old people. Besides these few, all the Muslims had already migrated to Al-Madinah and their houses were lying vacant. The Prophet ﷺ had not made up his mind, for he was awaiting permission from Allāh the Almighty. He also held back Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ to accompany him to Al-Madinah. Ali bin Abu Tālib ؓ was also delaying his migration waiting for permission from the Prophet ﷺ.

### **Holding Counsel by the Quraish in Dar An-Nadwah**

When the Quraish noticed that, one by one, all the Muslims slipped out of their hands and they had gone to Al-Madinah in substantial numbers, the Makkans felt it posed a danger to them and they grew anxious about the future. Since the Prophet ﷺ was now living almost alone, after the departure of his Companions, the Quraish targeted the very existence of the preacher of Islam. They were now in a haste to implement their plan, for with the departure of the Prophet ﷺ, the matter would get out of their control. They were all thinking in the same direction until every tribe of Makkah was occupied with the same common thought of putting the Prophet ﷺ to death. Thus, at the end of the month of Safar, the 14th year of Prophethood, the chiefs of all the tribes except Banu Hāshim assembled in Dar An-Nadwah to deliberate upon the issue. The chieftains of the Quraish who took part in the deliberation were:

Abu Jahl bin Hishām (from Banu Makhzum), Nabih and Munabbih—sons of Hajjāj (from Banu Sahm tribe), Umayyah bin Khalaf (from Banu Jumh), Abul-Baukhtari bin Hishām, Zam'ah bin Aswad and Hakim bin Hizām (from Banu Asad tribe), Nadr bin Hārith (from Banu Abdud-Dār tribe), Utbah and Shaibah—sons of Rabi'ah, Abu Sufyān bin Harb (from Banu Umayyah tribe), Tuaimah bin Adi, Jubair bin Mut'im, Hārith bin Āmir (from Banu Naufal tribe). Besides these

famous names, there were many other chieftains. One of the participants was a very old and experienced devil from the Najd and was the president of the session. There was no disagreement among the participants over the fact that Muhammad ﷺ was the source and center of all their problems. But they had a disagreement over how he should be dealt with.

One of them suggested: "Let him be put in fetters so that he dies of hunger and thirst." Thereupon the Sheikh of the Najd interrupted and said, "This is not a good proposal for his relatives and followers will try to seek his freedom which may result in violence and heavy bloodshed." Another person proposed: "Let him be driven out from Makkah with no permission for his re-entry." This suggestion was also contradicted by the Sheikh of the Najd. Many other suggestions were put forward and were rejected by him.

Lastly, Abu Jahl proposed: "Let a swordsman from each tribe be chosen, and all of them should surround Muhammad ﷺ on all sides and strike at him simultaneously so that his blood will be divided among all the tribes and clans. Moreover, Banu Hâshim will not be able to face the collective force of the entire Quraish tribes. Ultimately they will become content with the blood money, which may be collected easily from the tribes involved in the action." This proposal of Abu Jahl was highly appreciated by the Sheikh of the Najd and the resolution was unanimously passed. The consultations were going on in Dar An-Nadwah and at the same time Allâh the Almighty informed the Prophet ﷺ with all that was taking place. Moreover, permission for his migration was also granted.

## **Making Preparations for the Journey**

With the order for migration, the Prophet ﷺ called at the house of Abu Bakr ؓ at noon when the burning sun had forced the people indoors. Since it was an unusual time to visit, Abu Bakr ؓ speculated that migration must have been ordered. First of all he ﷺ inquired if there was any strange person in the house. When he was informed that there was no one in the house except Abu Bakr ؓ and his daughters, Asma' and Aishah ؓ, he disclosed that migration to Al-Madinah had been ordered.

"Who will accompany you on the journey?" Abu Bakr ﷺ asked. The Prophet ﷺ said, "You will accompany me." Having heard this, tears of joy trickled down from the eyes of Abu Bakr ﷺ and he said, "O Prophet of Allāh! I have already bought two she-camels for this purpose and have made them strong and stout, and I offer you one." The Prophet ﷺ said, "I will purchase it." Thus he paid for it and Abu Bakr ﷺ had to accept it. And from that moment, preparations for migration started. Asma' bint Abu Bakr ﷺ made them provisions of parched barley and some other food, A'ishah ﷺ was at that time still of a very tender age. After telling Abu Bakr ﷺ of the plan, the Prophet ﷺ went back home.

The polytheists had made their nefarious plan to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ on the following night. They surrounded his house from that evening. Their heinous plan was to make a surprise attack on the Prophet ﷺ when he comes out to offer his dawn prayers. The Prophet ﷺ had asked Ali bin Abu Tālib ﷺ to lie in his bed and to wrap himself in his mantle. He also gave Ali ﷺ the valuables that his pagan neighbors had left with him in trust, and instructed Ali ﷺ to give them back to their rightful owners the next morning. He also asked Ali ﷺ to migrate after settling these matters. After completing this, the Prophet ﷺ came out of his house in the dark hours of the night reciting the first nine Verses of *Surat Yāsin*. He threw a handful of dust at them, with the result that they did not see him.

"And (remember) when disbelievers plotted against you to imprison you or to kill you or to get out you; they were plotting and Allāh too was planing; and Allāh is the Best of the planners." (8:30)

Abu Bakr ﷺ paid Abdullah bin Uraiqit a reasonable sum to deliver both the she-camels at an appointed time and place to be told to him later, although he was a disbeliever, he was trustworthy.

The Prophet ﷺ came out of his house and went straight to Abu Bakr ﷺ. They set out right away, and took a low-lying trail to a distance of four miles outside of Makkah. They arrived at the cave of Mount Thaur and hid themselves in it. Ali bin Abu Tālib ﷺ kept sleeping soundly and peacefully in the bed of the Prophet ﷺ while the disbelievers of Makkah

continued their siege around the house the whole night. They were feeling satisfied thinking that Ali ﷺ was the Prophet ﷺ. When Ali ﷺ got up for the Fajr (dawn) prayer the disbelievers asked him, "Where's Muhammad?" Ali ﷺ retorted, "How can I know, for I was asleep the whole night. You should know his whereabouts since you have been on guard." The disbelievers held Ali ﷺ and beat him in a state of ferocity and then released him after sometime. Ali ﷺ then gave back the trusts to their rightful owners.

It is worth noticing here that although the disbelievers were thirsting for the life of the Prophet ﷺ, they trusted his honesty and integrity so much so that they left their precious valuables, gold, silver, and jewelry in trust with him. He ﷺ was very particular about it and that is why he left Ali ﷺ, someone he knew he could depend on, to return the trusts to his bloodthirsty enemies.

Leaving Ali ﷺ, the disbelievers called at the house of Abu Bakr ﷺ and knocked at the door. Asma' bint Abu Bakr ﷺ came out. Abu Jahl said, "O girl! Where is your father?" She said flatly, "I know nothing about him." Hearing this the wicked man slapped her so violently that her earrings fell down on the ground. After this, the furious disbelievers mounted a search for the Prophet ﷺ but it was in vain. Now, in a state of frustration, they announced a reward of one hundred camels for anyone who could catch and bring back Muhammad ﷺ dead or alive. The greed for such a substantial reward incited a number of persons to search the area but their efforts met with total failure.

### **The Sun and the Moon in the Cave of Mount Thaur**

When the two arrived at the cave in Mount Thaur Abu Bakr ﷺ requested the Prophet ﷺ to wait until he searched and cleaned up the cave. So he went in, searched it and stuffed the holes with the pieces of cloth torn from his garment and then came out to escort the Prophet ﷺ in. They remained hidden in the cave for three days and nights. Some chieftains and notables from the Quraish reached the mouth of the cave tracking their footprints. Since there was no trace beyond this, some of them suggested that either Muhammad ﷺ was hidden somewhere there or might be inside the cave or had flown to

heaven from the same spot. Someone said, "No human has entered this dark cave, it is in an undisturbed state for a long time." Another person noticed, "There is a spider's web across the mouth of the cave and anybody going in would have broken it." The third one pointed to a pigeon flying around and the eggs, which it was hatching. So, all of them grew confident that no human had entered the cave.

These disbelievers had come so close to the entrance that both the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ saw their feet and heard the voices of these bloodthirsty warriors of the Quraish. In such a critical moment Abu Bakr ؓ said, "The disbelievers have at last arrived." The Prophet ﷺ very confidently said, "Grieve not, Allāh is with us," and then added, "What do you think of those two with whom the third is Allāh?" The unfortunate disbelievers went back dismayed and disappointed.

Abu Bakr ؓ had already told his son Abdullah bin Abu Bakr ؓ to keep him informed of the daily activities of the disbelievers of Makkah at night. Similarly, he had instructed his slave, Âmir bin Fuhairah to graze his herd of goats anywhere but bring them to the cave of Thaur at night. Asma' bint Abu Bakr ؓ was assigned the duty of bringing meals to the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ in the night with the utmost care. The brother and sister, Abdullah and Asma' ؓ, returned after performing their duties, Âmir bin Fuhairah also did his job and his return in the late hours of the night by the way of Mount Thaur hid the tracks made by the others. When the fervor of the disbelievers subsided, Abdullah bin Uraiqt was told to bring the she-camels to the foot of Mount Thaur fulfilling his agreement. It was a credit to the Arabian sense of honor and national character that Abdullah bin Uraiqt who, although not a Muslim, kept the matter secret. He brought the two she-camels and his own camel near the foot of Mount Thaur on a moonlit night of Rabi' Al-Awwal, while Asma' ؓ turned up with parched barley and meal.

Muhammad ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ came out of the cave of Thaur. He mounted a she-camel named Al-Qaswa, while Abu Bakr ؓ and his slave Âmir bin Fuhairah got on the other she-camel. Abdullah bin Uraiqt serving as a guide, mounted his own camel. This small caravan of four secretly moved forward through routes away from



the main road. An event worth mentioning took place when the caravan was about to set out. The bag of food brought by Asma' ؓ, was without a string. When the bag was to be suspended from the camel's saddle, there was no string to serve this purpose. Asma' ؓ made no delay in tearing her waistband in two tying one half around her waist and with the other half, she tied the bag. This ready solution put forward by Asma' ؓ won for her praise from the Prophet ﷺ who also named her "The Lady with the String." She was later known by this title. Another interesting event that took place was that Abu Bakr ؓ took with him all his cash which, amounted to five or six thousand dirhams. His father, Quhâfah who was blind and still a disbeliever, came in and told his grand daughters that Abu Bakr ؓ went away with all the riches of the house. Asma' ؓ replied, "Grandfather, he has left enough money for us." Then she wrapped up a large number of pebbles in a piece of cloth and put it at the place where the money was always kept. She then caught the hand of her grandfather and took him to that spot. After touching it he was satisfied about the presence of money. Then he said to his granddaughters, "The departure of Abu Bakr now is no long a matter of sorrow."

## Migration

Before mounting Al-Qaswa, the Prophet ﷺ looked at Makkah and said overwhelmed with grief: "O Makkah! You are to me dearest of all the cities. But your citizens allowed me not to reside here." Following this Abu Bakr ؓ said, "They have banished their Prophet and they are now bound to be ruined." About the same time this *Ayah* (Verse) was revealed:

"Permission to fight is given to those who are fought against because they have been wronged; and surely, Allâh is Able to give them victory." (22:39)

It is worth considering how and under what rigorous circumstances they embraced Islam and remained firm and stuck to the truth in the face of opposition from all quarters and at the cost of soul-shattering torture and persecution. Could anyone dare imply that they had come to the fold of Islam under threats or out of greed? No, not at all! Now, after the revelation of this Verse begins the era when the believers



were permitted to face and fight those who obstructed the path of Islam. It is interesting to watch how people in large numbers accepted Islam under these trying situation that lay ahead.

This small caravan set out in the early part of the night. The next day, on Rabi' Al-Awwal 1, the 14th year of Prophethood, they arrived at the tent of Umm Ma'bad in the afternoon. That old woman belonged to the Khuzâ'ah tribe. She used to serve travelers water and drinks. The Prophet ﷺ halted there, took milk and then resumed his journey after a short rest. They had moved a little ahead when Surâqah bin Mâlik appeared on the scene pursuing the Prophet ﷺ.

Surâqah bin Mâlik bin Ju'shum was a famous warrior. He was once sitting in his dwelling place along with his companions when, in the early morning, a man came and revealed that he had witnessed three riders on camel moving in such and such direction. He presumed that they must be Muhammad ﷺ and his companions. Surâqah made a sign to silence him and said that he knew very well who those travelers were, and that they were such and such persons who had left on a journey last night. By this ploy Surâqah meant to chase and catch the Prophet ﷺ to get the reward of the one hundred camels and he wanted no one else to share in it. He came home in a hurry, sent his horse and weapons outside the dwelling and then he himself reached the spot where his horse was evading others' eyes. He hurried after the fugitives tracking their footprints. He let his horse go at a canter until the fugitives came into the full view. But his horse stumbled abruptly and he was thrown off. He remounted his horse but it again stumbled and he was thrown off. But he continued his chase until his horse stumbled for the third time, and he was thrown off again.

Such a queer misfortune sent fear through his body and he felt sure that his attempt would have to be given up. Then admitting his failure, he called out to the Prophet ﷺ to halt and listen to him. He ﷺ stopped his movement. Surâqah drew near and said, "I had come to take you back to Makkah as a prisoner. But I now seek your pardon. Please write for me a warrant of security besides forgiving me for my evil intentions. I promise to take back with me all those coming in this direction who have the same purpose as I did." Thus, with the order

of the Prophet ﷺ, either Abu Bakr ؓ or Āmir bin Fuhairah wrote the warrant sitting on the camel's back and threw it towards him. He turned back with the warrant and took back all others assuring them that the Prophet ﷺ was long gone and traceless. Surāqah embraced Islam after the conquest of Makkah and the warrant of security was a source of safety for him.

From the cave of Thaur and the low-lying land of Makkah, Abdullah bin Uraiqit took the Prophet ﷺ to the coastal area. Passing across the main track to the other side of Uṣfān. He continued his journey up to Quda'id through the valley of Amaj and then cutting across the main road he came down into the field of Kharār Laqaf, Mudlijah and Majāj crossing the territory of Dhul-Ghadwin and passing through the grove of Dhu Salam they crossed Al-Abābid and Al-Arj. In the valley of Al-Arj, a camel of the caravan became exhausted. A man of Aslam clan brought a camel from Aus bin Hajar, who also gave a slave to accompany the Prophet ﷺ. From there the caravan, after crossing Thaniyatul-Āir, reached the valley of Reem, and from there to Quba' at noon.

After Surāqah bin Mālik retreated, the caravan had marched a little ahead when Zubair bin Awwām ؓ came across them on his way back to Makkah at the head of his trade caravan. He gave gifts of garments to the Prophet ﷺ with his fervent desire to join the Prophet ﷺ in Al-Madinah after reaching Makkah. During this journey, people at various places recognized Abu Bakr ؓ, for they had so often seen him leading trade caravans. However, they were not familiar with the Prophet ﷺ and so, they asked Abu Bakr ؓ about the person going ahead of him. He replied, "This is my leader and the guide."

## **End of the Journey**

After an eight-day journey, the Prophet ﷺ arrived at Quba' on Rabia al-Awwal 8, the 14th year of Prophethood (corresponding September 23, 622 CE) at noon. Quba' lies at a distance of a few miles from Al-Madinah and was generally taken as the locality of Al-Madinah. It was largely inhabited by Banu Amr bin Auf who had already been enlightened by Islam. A few days before the departure of the Prophet ﷺ from Makkah, the news of his arrival in Al-Madinah was in the air.

The *Ansâr* of Al-Madinah would come out of their dwellings early in the morning and kept waiting till noon everyday. Thus when the Prophet ﷺ arrived at Quba' at noon, they had already gone back after waiting for some time.

A certain Jew who was watching the crowds of Muslims awaiting someone by coming out of their settlement knew that Muhammad ﷺ was about to come from Makkah. This Jew was then, by chance, upstairs when he witnessed the small caravan moving into Quba'. Guessing it to be the caravan of the Prophet ﷺ, he cried at the top of his voice: "O the people of Arabia, O those taking rest at noon, there has come your object of love." Having heard this call, the people rushed out of their dwellings and waves of exultation gripped the whole atmosphere of Quba'. He ﷺ was emerging from an orchard of dates. Bearing in mind that the people might fall into confusion regarding the identification of the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr ؓ drew himself back and shaded the Prophet ﷺ with his mantle, thus making a clear distinction between the master and the servant.

The Prophet ﷺ was now entering Quba' and the little girls of the *Ansâr* were reciting in great fervor and boundless joy:

"On the hillside whence caravans are given a send-off,  
The full moon comes up in the day.  
All the while Allâh is praised.  
We had better return our thanks  
The noble one, O you sent to us,  
You have brought binding commands."

The Prophet ﷺ entered Quba' on Monday and stayed there until Friday. The Prophet ﷺ stayed in the house of Kulthum bin Hadm while Abu Bakr ؓ stayed with Habib bin Asâf ؓ. He ﷺ would hold his assemblies in the house of Sa'd bin Khaithamah ؓ and the people visited him at that same place. During this short stay in Quba', he ﷺ laid the foundation of a mosque which is the first mosque ever built after the advent of Islam. On Friday, the 12th Rabi' Al-Awwal, he left Quba' and made his entry into Al-Madinah. He ﷺ was still in Quba' when Ali bin Abu Tâlib ؓ came and joined him. Ali ؓ had made this long and arduous journey on foot. While the Prophet ﷺ was

staying in Quba', Ali ﷺ who had been busy returning the deposits of the people to their rightful owners was blessed with the honor of joining the Prophet ﷺ. He had left Makkah the very day the Prophet ﷺ left the cave of Thaur. But Ali ﷺ, a traveler by himself, made his movement during the night and kept himself hidden in the day. The Prophet ﷺ came avoiding the busy thoroughfares and reached Quba' in eight days, while Ali ﷺ undertook the journey by the well-known routes but was made late by three or four days because of being on foot.

### Entry into Al-Madinah

Taking leave of the people of Quba' and Banu Amr bin Auf on Friday, the Prophet ﷺ moved forward to make his stay in Al-Madinah. Every household of each locality expressed its strong desire that the Prophet ﷺ would stay with them. He was in the locality of Banu Sâlim bin Auf when the time for the Friday (*Jumu'ah*) prayer drew near. The Prophet ﷺ led the prayer at the same place in a field with about a hundred men behind him. This was the first Friday prayer of the Prophet ﷺ in Al-Madinah and the first time the Friday sermon (*Khutbah*) was ever delivered. Later on, a mosque was built at that place.

After offering the Friday prayer, the Prophet ﷺ mounted his she-camel. Banu Sâlim bin Auf approached him and took hold of his she-camel's halter with the request that he stay with them. The people of other clans and localities also came in groups and made the same request. This led to a clash of words, which ended when the Prophet ﷺ said to one and all: "Let her go her way. She is guided by Allâh. I shall stop where the animal sits down." The *Ansâr* and *Muhâjirîn* followed the she-camel on all sides. He set the halter loose and free and the she-camel moved ahead slowly. All eyes were focused on the animal and they were eagerly waiting for it to kneel down.

When she entered the locality of Banu Biyâdah, Ziyâd bin Labid and Urwah bin Amr, the chieftains of the tribe wanted to take hold of the halter but the Prophet ﷺ forbade them saying: "Leave her for she has already been commanded." Then the she-camel stepped into the locality of Banu Sâ'idah and Sa'd bin Ubâdah and Mundhir bin Amr, the chieftains of Banu Sâ'idah made the same attempt but received the

same words from the Prophet ﷺ. After this, she reached the locality of Banu Al-Hârith bin Al-Khazraj, and Sa'd bin Ar-Rabi', Khârijah bin Zaid and Abdullah bin Rawahah stepped forward to stop her but received the same reply. From there the she-camel made an entry into the locality of Banu Adi bin An-Najjâr. Since Abdul-Muttalib's mother Salma bint Amr belonged to this clan, they made their claim for the Prophet ﷺ to stop there. Thus Salit bin Qais and Asirah bin Abu Khârija, the chieftains of Banu Adi took hold of the halter but he ﷺ asked them to leave it for the animal had prior instructions for herself. At last the she-camel arrived at the locality of Banu Mâlik bin An-Najjâr and knelt down in a deserted and fallow land for a while and then got up and advanced a little only to turn back and be seated on the same spot again. This time she shook herself and then lay down on her neck wagging her tail.

Close to this unpopulated land was the house of Abu Ayub Khâlid bin Zaid Ansâri ؓ. He rushed to the spot with his face beaming with joy and took the belongings of the Prophet ﷺ to his house. Thus he ﷺ made his stay in his house. The deserted land was the property of two orphan boys Sahl and Suhail. The piece of land had a few date trees, graves of the polytheists and a resting spot for the herds of cattle. "Who is the owner of this land?" The Prophet ﷺ inquired. Mu'adh bin Afra' submitted, "This piece of land belongs to two orphan boys related to me and they are nourished by me; I shall make them agree, you may take it for building a mosque." But the Prophet ﷺ asserted, "I want to buy it, and will not take it without paying the price." Abu Bakr ؓ made the payment at once. And with the order of the Prophet ﷺ the date trees were cut, the graves leveled, and the construction work of the mosque was started then and there. The Prophet ﷺ joined the builders. The walls of the mosque were constructed with stone and kneaded clay, the roof with the wood of the date palm and date leaves. Until the construction of a separate house for himself, the Prophet ﷺ remained staying with Abu Ayub Ansâri ؓ in his house as his guest. This is the same Abu Ayub Ansâri ؓ whose grave lies in Constantinople where he was honored later with martyrdom during the siege of Constantinople in the caliphate of Mu'âwiyah in 48 AH.

Prophet ﷺ stayed in the house of Abu Ayub Ansâri ؓ for six months and a few days. The mosque built during the time of the Prophet ﷺ saw no change before the caliphate of Umar ؓ. During his caliphate, it underwent an expansion for the first time. Uthmân bin Affân ؓ strengthened it. During the time of Walid bin Abdul-Malik, it saw more expansion with the inclusion of the dwellings of the noble wives of the Prophet ﷺ. Mâmun Rashid Abbâsi adorned the mosque beautifully. The Prophet ﷺ was in the house of Abu Ayub Ansâri ؓ when he sent Zaid bin Hârithah and Abu Râfi ؓ to bring Fâtimah, Umm Kulthum, Saudah bint Zam'ah, Usâmah bin Zaid and his mother, Umm Aiman ؓ. Abdullah bin Abu Bakr ؓ also, along with his relatives, accompanied them. Talhah bin Ubaidullah ؓ also joined the caravan. After the arrival of these people, the Prophet ﷺ shifted to his newly built house.

## Calendar Year

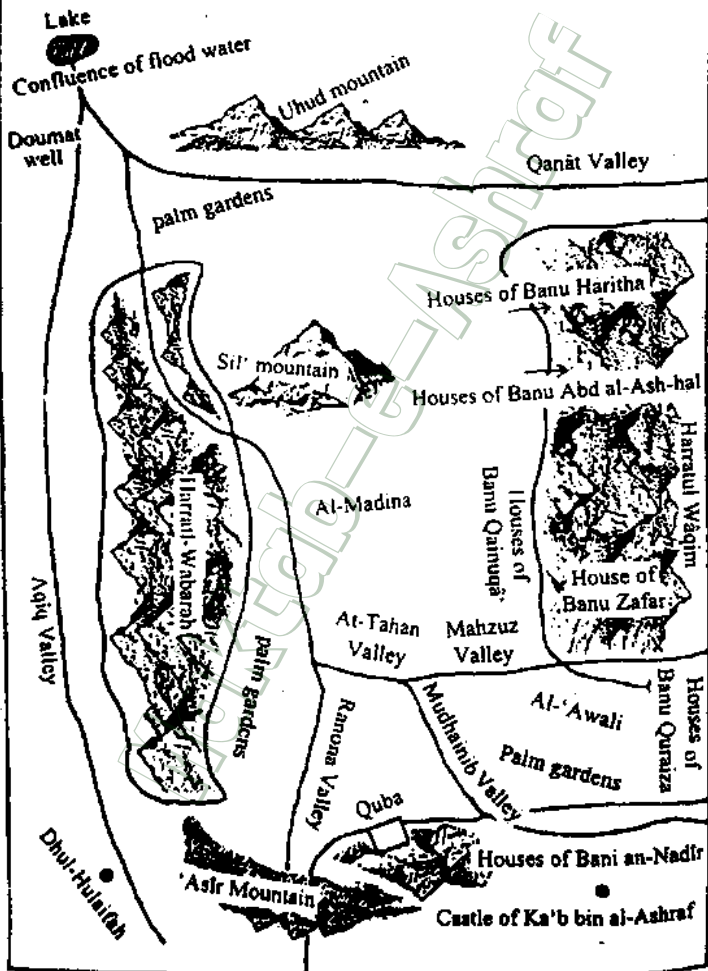
Until now the year of Prophethood was being used to keep account of the time. It is notable that the name and the order of the lunar months are the same as was the custom in Arabia from before. Thus the first year of Prophethood elapsed just in a few months. This is the reason why the entry of the Prophet ﷺ into Al-Madinah is being reported in the month of Rabi' Al-Awwal, the 14th year of the Prophethood, while his Prophethood was actually spread over a span of 12½ years. Similarly, the Hijrah Calendar starts from the Prophet's emigration to Al-Madinah. Since he ﷺ had come to Al-Madinah on Rabi' Al-Awwal 12, the first Hijrah year began from Muharram; Thus the Prophet ﷺ stayed in the house of Abu Ayub Ansâri ؓ until the 2nd Hijrah year.

## First Year of Migration

Among the events of the first year of migration, the construction of the Prophet's Mosque and his house, and the arrival of the rest of the believers to Al-Madinah has already been mentioned. The death of Abu Umâmah As'ad bin Zurârah ؓ is worthy of mention here. Abu Umâmah ؓ was not suffering from any disease. All of sudden he fell ill and passed away. When this sad news was given the Prophet ﷺ, he remarked, "The polytheists have got an opportunity to say, 'what

# Dwelling of Yathrib tribes at the time of migration

North



kind of Prophet is he that one of his Companions becomes the target of sudden death'. After his death, the people of Banu Najjār presented themselves to the Prophet ﷺ and submitted, "Abu Umāmah was our chief. Please choose for us another chief in his place." The Prophet ﷺ replied, "You Banu Najjār are all my maternal uncles, so I belong to you. Thus I am myself your chief." Hearing this, Banu Najjār's joy knew no bounds. Moreover, this device warded off the possibility of other candidates for chief clashing over this matter. The courage and determination of the clan increased.

The first objective of the Prophet ﷺ was to achieve law and order and good mutual relations among the people. He ﷺ felt right away that the *Muhājirin* had come from Makkah and so they must not become a source of constant mental stress for the people of Al-Madinah. But he was equally conscious of the stark reality that the *Muhājirin* had migrated from Makkah sacrificing everything for their faith, their homes, motherland, relatives, wealth, property, family and clan. They should be treated in a manner that they were not overtaken by a deep sense of loss, dejection and frustration. Thus the Prophet ﷺ convened a meeting of the *Muhājirin* and the *Ansār* and told them about the virtues of Islamic brotherhood. He then established bonds of brotherhood between the *Muhājirin* and the *Ansār*, putting them together in an atmosphere of mutual welfare. Each *Ansār* took a *Muhājir* as his brother.

Abu Bakr's brother in faith was Khārijah bin Zubair Ansāri and Umar bin Khattāb entered the bond of brotherhood with Utbān bin Mālik Ansāri, Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah with Sa'd bin Mu'adh Ansāri, Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf with Sa'd bin Ar-Rabi', Zubair bin Al-Awwām with Salāmah bin Salāmah, Uthmān bin Affān with Thābit bin Al-Mundhir Ansāri. Similarly, Talhah bin Ubaidullah and Ka'b bin Mālik, Mus'ab bin Umair and Abu Ayub Ansāri, Ammār bin Yāsir and Hudhaifah bin Al-Yamān ﷺ mutually consolidated their bonds of brotherhood.

The *Ansār* remained faithful to this arrangement with so much caution and sincerity that human history is unable to give any other similar example. The *Ansār* treated their *Muhājir* brothers like their own and entrusted to them their wealth and property in abundance. Some of



the *Ansār* went to such an extent that they wanted to divorce one of their two wives and to give one to their brother in faith to marry. But the *Muhājirin* also disliked being a burden on their *Ansāri* brothers and undertook a life of sweat and toil to shoulder their own burden.

### First Political Document

One event worth mentioning after the migration was a pact that the Prophet ﷺ had drawn up for the inhabitants of Al-Madinah, including the Jews and the polytheists. Included in it were a number of terms and conditions. The main condition being that, in case of an attack on Al-Madinah launched by outsiders, the people of Al-Madinah as a whole would raise arms together against the enemies. Another condition being that the Jews of Al-Madinah would not provide refuge to the Quraish of Makkah or their allies. None of the citizens of Al-Madinah would put any hurdle in the way of anyone else's religion, life or property. If two people of Al-Madinah had a falling-out on an issue and were not able to find any solution to it by themselves, they would have to abide by the decision made by the Prophet ﷺ concerning it. The burden of the war expenditures would be shared equally by all the people of Al-Madinah. The Muslims of Al-Madinah would be considered as friends of the Jews, so also they (the Jews) would have to treat as friend those tribes and clans who were in alliance with the Muslims. All kinds of fighting and bloodshed would be treated as prohibited in the territory of Al-Madinah. All the people of Al-Madinah were to be considered bound to help the oppressed. This pact was signed by all the tribes of Al-Madinah.

After the agreement was finalized, the Prophet ﷺ made an all-out effort to bring the clans around Al-Madinah into the fold of this pact so that all kinds of disruptions, disorder and bloodshed were curbed once and for all. The Prophet ﷺ was so eager to widen the scope of this pact that he made a special journey to Banu Damrah bin Bakr bin Abd Manāf to bring them around to this recently signed pact. He ﷺ won over their chief, Amr bin Makhshi to the idea and he put his initials on the document. He also got the people of Mount Buwāt and of Dhul-Ushairah in Yanbu and Banu Mudlij to accept the peace

treaty. The purpose of the Prophet ﷺ behind this peace pact was to create an atmosphere of peace and order so that the people could be at peace and be able to reflect on the message of Islam in an air of safety and security. These peace efforts were yet to bring fruit when clandestine activities in Al-Madinah and onslaughts from outside plunged Al-Madinah into disorder once again.

### **Beginning of Hypocrisy**

There happened to be in Al-Madinah a man of great wisdom, experience and astuteness and he wielded influence both on the Aus and the Khazraj. A short time before, both of the tribes had the bloody battle of Bu'āth, in this battle they lost much of their power and strength and Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salul was shrewd enough to take advantage of their weaknesses. His clever tricks achieved for him immense popularity among both tribes. While the people were making up their minds about installing Abdullah bin Ubai as the chief or king of Al-Madinah, Islam started to take hold in Al-Madinah. They had planned to celebrate the occasion of Abdullah's ascension to leadership on a very high level and even a crown had already been made for him. With the advent of Islam in Al-Madinah, the atmosphere changed beyond recognition.

After the arrival of the Prophet ﷺ in Al-Madinah, the Muslims became its mightiest power. Furthermore, the peace pact made all the people of Al-Madinah recognize the strength and supremacy of Islam and they all signed it signifying their acceptance of the superiority of the Muslims. The grand dreams of Abdullah bin Ubai were shattered into pieces. Since he was shrewd before anything else, he never highlighted his grievances but he harbored malice against the Prophet ﷺ from the day he appeared in Al-Madinah. The idolaters among the Aus and the Khazraj tribes were still under the influence of Abdullah bin Ubai. When the Quraish of Makkah found out that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions were enjoying a peaceful life after arriving in Al-Madinah, and the circle of Islam was expanding by leaps and bounds, they felt terribly disturbed. Shooting their first arrow at Islam in Al-Madinah they wrote a letter to Abdullah bin Ubai and the polytheists of Al-Madinah. They warned them against providing refuge to the

fugitives and asked them to expel them (the Muslims) from their territory, failing this they should be ready to face an onslaught on Al-Madinah ending in the killing of their young and the capturing of their women.

In the wake of receiving this message from the Quraish of Makkah, Abdullah bin Ubai assembled all the polytheists and kindled flames of fighting in their hearts. At the opportune moment, the Prophet ﷺ was informed of the development and he hurried to the gathering of the people and said to them: "The Quraish of Makkah have attempted to deceive you and you will suffer heavy losses if you become victims of their allurements. It is better for you to reject their warning flatly and keep to your agreement finalized between you and us. In case the Quraish make an assault against the people of Al-Madinah, it will be easier to fight them if we are united. But if you fight the Muslims, you are bound to kill your own sons and close relatives with your own swords and bring upon yourselves complete destruction. Having heard the wise counsel of the Prophet ﷺ, the entire gathering followed his point and dispersed at once. They deserted Abdullah bin Ubai and he was left alone looking pathetic.

The same year, the Muslims began to use the *Adhân* to call the people to perform prayer in congregation. It was also the year when Abdullah bin Salâm, a great scholar of the Jews, accepted Islam. Salmân the Persian also embraced Islam after accepting Christianity and had gone through the scriptures of the Jews and the Christians who were awaiting the advent of the last Prophet. The payment of *Zakât* was also made obligatory in this year.

### The Second Year of Migration

The Quraish appeared defeated in the wake of the Prophet's departure to Al-Madinah unharmed. The acute sense of shameful defeat had filled them with a maddening pain which could be cured only by taking a satisfactory revenge. The simple goal before the Makkan polytheists was to cause death and destruction to the Prophet ﷺ and his Muslim followers. This wild rage had taken them by storm. Putting aside their petty differences and discord, they had risen to the

occasion as one individual with the single purpose of punishing the followers of Islam. There lay a distance of 300 miles between Makkah and Al-Madinah. Special care and preparations were needed for the Makkans to invade Al-Madinah along with winning the sympathies of the tribes living on the way and forming alliances with the forces hostile to Islam.

The Prophet ﷺ was, on the other hand, wise enough to foresee the lurking menace and he had to play his role as a reliable chief and an experienced and skilful commander. Permission for defensive fighting had already been received. Thus the time for removing the obstructions in the way of Islam had arrived. The Muslim population in Al-Madinah was, in no way, more than three or four hundred. But, in spite of lacking numbers and weapons, the evil designs and mischief of the disbelievers was more than enough to kindle in their hearts determination and ignite their Arabian sense of honor and bravery. They repeatedly placed before the Prophet ﷺ their deep desire to raise arms against the enemies of Islam and sought his permission to fight.

When the love of Islam went deep into the hearts of the believers and they appeared mentally prepared to fight the forces inimical to Islam, permission from Allāh the Almighty came for curbing the evildoers. However, the series of events taking place provide ample proof that the Messenger of Islam preferred peace to war and forgiveness to revenge. A chieftain of Makkah, Kurz bin Jābir came from Makkah along with a band of people, and raided some grazing cattle near Al-Madinah and made off with a large number of camels belonging to the believers. When the Muslims got the news, they chased the criminals but they escaped. However, it was a serious warning for the people of Al-Madinah that their enemies could rob them of their goods and property at a distance of about three hundred miles from their houses. Besides, the disbelievers were constantly in correspondence with Abdullah bin Ubai and the Jews of Al-Madinah conspiring against the Muslim interests.

During Sha'bān of this year, the *Qiblah* (direction of prayer) was changed for the Muslims to Makkah and the fasting of Ramadān was made obligatory before the end of Sha'bān. At the beginning of the month of Ramadān, news came to Al-Madinah that a Makkan caravan

was coming from Syria which would pass by Al-Madinah. In order to instill fear in the disbelievers and also to reply to Kurz bin Jâbir's attack, the Prophet ﷺ asked a party of the *Muhâjirin* and *Ansâr* to intercept the caravan so that the Makkans would know that to worsen the relations with the people of Al-Madinah might prove injurious to their trading activities with Syria. This party was sent with the sole purpose of frightening them and not for fighting.

The Makkan trade caravan became informed of the movement of the Muslim party. Abu Sufyân, the head of the caravan, led it off the main routes. He also hired Damdam bin Amr Ghifârî to hurry to Makkah with the information that the caravan was facing danger from the Muslims, and they should rush to help it and save their goods. In the wake of this news, Abu Jahl marched forward with great enthusiasm from Makkah at the head of a large army consisting of seven hundred camels and three hundred horses. The entire army was armed to the teeth and the reciters of martial songs also accompanied the army. Abbâs bin Abdul-Muttalib, Utbah bin Rabi'ah, Umayyah bin Khalf, Nadar bin Hârith, Abu Jahl bin Hishâm and others, a total of thirteen men in all were assigned the duty of serving food to the army. The Muslim party sent to terrorize the trade caravan came back to Al-Madinah.

### **The Battle of Badr**

Abu Sufyân sent word to Abu Jahl that he had arrived at Makkah and that he should also come back. But Abu Jahl turned down the suggestion. Abu Jahl had, in truth, not come out with the army simply to provide safety but also to avenge the killing of Amr bin Hadrami at the hands of a Muslim party dispatched by the Prophet ﷺ to Nakhlah to probe some incident.

The Quraish had already started preparations to retaliate. They were about to invade Al-Madinah when Damdam bin Amr reached Makkah to seek their help. Abu Jahl was marching towards Al-Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ became aware of the movement of the Quraish army and all the notable chieftains like Abu Jahl, Utbah, Shaibah, Walid, Hanzalah, Ubaidah, Âsi, Harth, Tuaimah, Zam'ah, Aqil, Abul-Bakhtari, Mas'ud, Munabbih, Nabih, Naufal, Sâ'ib, and Rifâ'ah accompanying the Makkan troops.

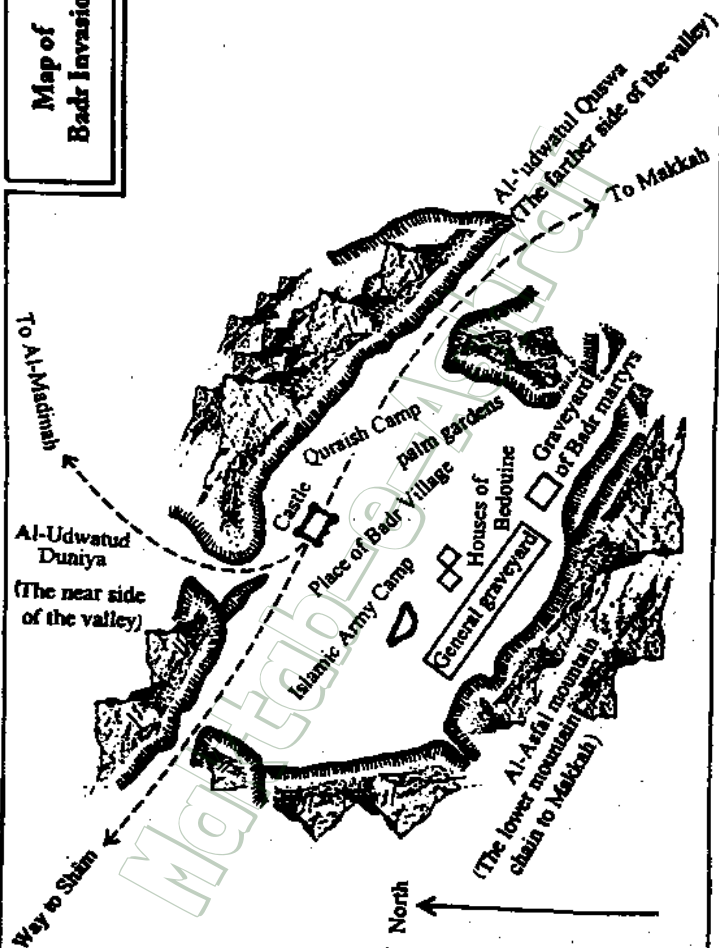
The Prophet ﷺ summoned his followers and asked for their advice regarding the current development and said to the Companions: "Makkah has sent you its darlings. What do you think about facing them?" First of all Abu Bakr ؓ and then Umar bin Khattāb ؓ and Miqdād ؓ uttered words of valor and determination. The last one said: "O Prophet of Allāh, we will not say as the Children of Israel said to Moses: 'Go you and your Lord and fight, we will sit here'." The Prophet ﷺ asked again for their advice. By this he really wanted to know the reaction of the Ansār for all the three who had pledged their support and loyalty belonged to the *Muhājirin*. When the Prophet ﷺ put the same question again, the Ansār now realized that the question was meant for them.

Their original pledge with him implied their defending him in Al-Madinah and did not put them under any obligation to take part in a military expedition outside their territory. Sa'd bin Mu'ādh ؓ immediately got up to say in reply: "O Prophet of Allāh, it seems as if you are speaking to us and you want to have our answer." "Yes," the Prophet ﷺ said. Sa'd ؓ then said, "We have believed in you and have full faith in your being Allāh's Messenger. How can it be possible that Allāh's Messenger would go out to fight the disbelievers and we remain sitting in our houses? These disbelievers are, after all, men like us. How can we fear them? If you command us to plunge into the sea, we will do so."

### Lack of Means:

Satisfied with the staunch support and determination of the Companions, the Prophet ﷺ resolved to march out. The total number of the combatants did not exceed 310 or 312 or 313. When they were finally examined outside the city, some minor children were found accompanying the troops who were not fit to take part in battle yet. Thus the Prophet ﷺ asked them to go back. Some of them persistently entreated to be enlisted and of those some were granted permission to accompany the army. It was in no way a well-equipped force. This Islamic army had only two horses under the charge of Zubair bin Awwām and Miqdād ؓ and seventy camels to be mounted by three or four persons at a time. Many others accompanied on foot. On

# Map of Badr Invasion



reaching Badr, the Islamic army noticed that the enemy force had already captured the raised piece of land and pitched their tents on it. The Muslims had to take the low-lying sandy spot. However, the wells of Badr were under the control of the Muslim force. The Prophet ﷺ issued orders that any of the disbelievers coming for water must not be stopped. A hut of palm branches was erected for the Prophet ﷺ on an elevation overlooking the battlefield. He prayed and invoked the help and blessings of Allāh.

The number of the Companions were one-third of the Makkans, and their weapons were less than one-hundredth of what the Quraish army had. Their army consisted of young and strong men, and all wearing armor. The Muslims were, on the other hand, starving, weak, sick and old. Most of them didn't even possess simple weapons. Some of them had swords but no bows and arrows, while others possessed spears but no swords. When the Muslims encamped, the disbelievers sent Umair bin Wahb Jumahi as a spy to find out the number of Muslim soldiers. Umair reported that they were not more than 310, having a total cavalry of only two. The height of the disbelievers arrogance may be gauged from the statement of Utbah bin Rabi'ah who scornfully remarked, "Let us go back without a fight," meaning the disgracefully low number of the Muslims was no match for the large and well-equipped army of the Makkans. But Abu Jahl vehemently opposed the proposal expressing his firm determination to exterminate them no matter how few they were.

### Beginning of War:

At last, on Ramadān 17, 2 AH, when the two armies came face to face, the Prophet ﷺ returned to his small hut and beseeched Allāh for Divine help. He entreated the Lord:

"O Allāh! If you were to exterminate this small group of Muslims, you will be worshipped on earth no more."

He then offered two *Rak'ah* of prayer. Following this, he dozed a little and then came out fresh and smiling from his hut and said with utmost confidence:

"The enemy force is defeated. They took to their heels."



The Prophet ﷺ had already issued an order not to initiate the fighting. There were approximately eighty Muslims from the *Muhājirin* and the rest belonged to the *Ansār*. Among the *Ansār*, sixty-one were from the Aus and one hundred and seventy from Khazraj. The ranks on both sides were set in order. The Prophet ﷺ was setting the ranks with an arrow in his hand.

In the meantime, in accordance with the Arabian fashion, Utbah and Shaibah—sons of Rabi'ah and Walid bin Utbah stepped forward, and in response to their call, three of the *Ansār*, Auf and Mu'awwidh—the sons of Afra' and Abdullah bin Rawāhah came forward to give them battle. Utbah asked, "Who are you?" "We are the *Ansār*," they answered. "We need not fight with you," Utbah said in a tone filled with arrogance. He then called out: "O Muhammad; send our peers, men of our own tribe." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Go ahead, O Hamzah bin Abdul-Muttalib to give battle to Utbah, Ubaidah bin Al-Hārith to fight with Shaibah—the brother of Utbah, and Ali bin Abu Tālib to engage Walid—the son of Utbah." With the order, all the three Companions rose from their spots and came face to face with their respective rivals. Utbah wanted to know their names although he knew them very well. Then hearing their names he said, "Yes, we will fight with you." The confrontation began. Hamzah and Ali ﷺ put the father and the son Utbah and Walid to the sword. Ubaidah ﷺ and Shaibah both received injuries in the encounter. Ali bin Abu Tālib and Hamzah ﷺ, did away with the enemy of Islam and brought Ubaidah ﷺ to the Prophet ﷺ.

Now the disbelievers launched a full-scale attack and the Muslim troops also moved forward to face their enemies. Both sides showed great valor. As the day of Badr drew towards its close, the defeated disbelievers fled the battlefield leaving behind seventy men slain and seventy as prisoners. When the fighting started, the Prophet ﷺ came out to have a full view of the situation. He pointed out to the Muslims that Banu Hāshim did not join the enemy force out of their own will and desire, it was due only to compulsion and so they deserved special concessions. So Abbās bin Abdul-Muttalib must not be killed, and Abul-Bakhtari also deserves forgiveness. Abu Hudhaifah ﷺ said, "How can it be that I kill my brother and leave Abbās bin Abdul-

Muttalib, I will not let him go if Abbās fights with me." Later on Hudhaifah ؓ was deeply repentant for his words and expressed great regret.

Mujadhdhir bin Ziyād ؓ happened to face Abul-Bakhtari and said to him, "I have been ordered not to fight with you, so keep away." But Abul-Bakhtari made an attempt to save a friend of his and was killed. Umayyah bin Khalaf and his son Ali bin Umayyah were in great distress to save their lives. During the days of Ignorance Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf ؓ and Umayyah were close friends, so he gave him protection. But the moment Bilāl ؓ noticed him, he called some Ansār and they together fell on Umayyah and his son and did away with them despite Abdur-Rahmān's efforts to save them. Umair bin Al-Hamām ؓ came to the Prophet ﷺ eating dates and asked, "Shall I go to Paradise at once if I am killed fighting the disbelievers?" He said, "Yes." He threw away the dates in his hand and ran to the battlefield and fought with the enemy until he was honored with martyrdom.

When the battle was in full swing, the Prophet ﷺ picked a handful of dust and threw it towards the disbelievers after reciting something over it. It resulted in the enemy fighters fleeing for their lives. Mu'ādh bin Amr ؓ, a young Ansār came across Abu Jahl who was armor clad. Mu'ādh bin Amr ؓ struck at his uncovered leg with his sword so forcefully that it was cut off from the shin. When Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl found his father fatally injured, he fell upon Mu'ādh bin Amr ؓ and struck him with his sword so violently that his left arm was nearly separated from the shoulder but he kept fighting the whole day with the hanging arm. But when it gave him more trouble, he put the hanging part under his foot and pulled apart by a violent force. At the same moment Mu'awwidh bin Afra' ؓ, another young man from the Ansār drew near Abu Jahl and put him to the sword.

When the disbelievers fled the battlefield and the believers were victorious in this historic event, Allāh's Messenger ﷺ asked for a search of the dead body of Abu Jahl. Abdullah bin Mas'ud ؓ searched through the dead bodies and found Abu Jahl lying half-dead. Abdullah bin Mas'ud ؓ got on his chest and said, 'Behold, O enemy of Allāh, what a disgrace you have been put to by Allāh.' Abu Jahl said, 'What's the

outcome of battle?" Abdullah bin Mas'ud ؓ replied, "It ended in victory for the believers and defeat for the disbelievers." When he was about to cut his head off he said, "Cut off my head from near the shoulders so that it looks bigger than the heads of all others and it is seen as the head of a chief." Abdullah bin Mas'ud ؓ chopped his head off and laid it down at the feet of the Prophet ﷺ. Having noticed it, Allāh's Messenger ﷺ thanked Allāh. This battle martyred fourteen believers, six from the *Muhājirin* and eight from the *Ansār*. The battle being over, Allāh's Messenger ﷺ buried the believers and ordered that the dead among the infidels should be thrown into a pit or well and let them be covered with dust.

The disbelievers were so frightened when they fled the field that they even lost track of their Commander, Abu Jahl and left him behind fatally injured and dying. Harth bin Zam'ah, Abu Qais bin Al-Fākihah, Ali bin Umayyah and Ās bin Utbah were young men and had deep sympathy with the Prophet ﷺ in Makkah; or they had secretly accepted Islam. After the migration of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, they were flayed and decried by their clansmen and relatives and pressed to return to their former faith. So they openly disobeyed Allāh's Messenger ﷺ and joined the battle against Islam. They were all killed in the battle along with all the notable chieftains from the Quraish. The soul-shattering news of the disbelievers' ignominious defeat in the battlefield of Badr left the Makkans struck with grief.

The Prophet ﷺ entrusted the booty to Abdullah bin Ka'b ؓ who belonged to Banu Najjār, and sent Abdullah bin Rawāhah and Zaid bin Hārithah ؓ with the glad tidings of victory to the upper and lower settlements of Al-Madinah. Usāmah bin Zaid ؓ who was left in Al-Madinah as the deputy of the Prophet ﷺ, remarks, "The glad tidings of the victory were received by us at a time when we were burying Ruqayyah ؓ, the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ and the wife of Uthmān bin Affān ؓ. The news of victory had arrived in Al-Madinah on 18 Ramadān."

Being free from his engagement in the battlefield of Badr, the Prophet ﷺ proceeded to Al-Madinah. On reaching Safra', he with the Command of Allāh the Almighty, distributed the booty equally

among the Muslims, and ordered Nadr bin Al-Hârith bin Kildah (from Banu Abdud-Dâr) to be beheaded. Similarly, arriving at Irq-uz-Zabyah, he issued the same order for Uqbah bin Abu Mu'ait bin Abu Amr bin Linah. These two among the prisoners of the battle of Badr were hard-core and ruthless enemies of the Prophet ﷺ and Islam and equal to Abu Jahl in enmity. Thereafter the Prophet ﷺ, along with his Companions, speedily left for Al-Madinah leaving the prisoners and their guards behind who joined them in Al-Madinah the next day.

### General Treatment of the Prisoners:

When the captives reached Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ said distributing them among the Companions, "Treat them generously." Among them was Abu Aziz bin Umair who was the standard-bearer of the disbelievers' army and also the full brother of Mus'ab bin Umair ؓ. Abu Aziz relates, "When I was being brought to Al-Madinah, I was in the custody of a group of the *Ansâr*. Whenever they sat down to dine, they gave bread to me and they began to eat dates. Being ashamed, I tried to return it but whenever I gave the bread to any of them, he gave it back to me." On reaching Al-Madinah, Abu Aziz was lodged with Abu Yusr Ansâri ؓ. Mus'ab bin Umair ؓ said to Abu Yusr Ansâri ؓ, "Treat him roughly, for his mother is a wealthy woman." Abu Aziz said, "Brother, is it for you to give this counsel?" "You are not my brother," replied Umair ؓ, "instead he is my brother who is tying up your hands." The mother of Abu Aziz sent four thousand dirhams for his release.

The defeat suffered by the polytheists plunged Makkah into gloom. There was not a house in the city, which did not go into mourning. The Makkans stood aghast and agitated. However, the suppressed Muslims of Makkah breathed a sigh of relief and felt elated. Abu Lahab, who could not join the army at Badr, was so terribly shocked that he died after a week.

### The Issue of the Captives:

Concerning the captives, Allâh's Messenger ﷺ sought the advice of the Companions. Umar bin Khattâb ؓ submitted, "In my opinion everyone of us should kill his own relatives to establish beyond doubt

that, in Islam, love of faith is far greater than love for relations." Abu Bakr ؓ said, "Let all the captives be released in return for reasonable ransoms so that the amount be invested in developing weaponry. Besides, some of them may embrace Islam in future." The Prophet ﷺ liked the proposal of Abu Bakr ؓ. Some of the prisoners were released without ransom. The Makkans sent from one thousand to four thousand dirhams to pay for the release of their relatives. The captives who knew reading and writing but were unable to pay ransom were allowed freedom after teaching ten children to read and write.

Zainab ؓ, the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ, sent her necklace as a ransom for the release of Abul-Âs, her husband, who was also among the captives. Allâh's Messenger ﷺ noticed the necklace and said to his Companions, "If you think it fit, send the necklace back to Zainab, for it was a gift from her mother Khadijah." The Companions were pleased to accept it and released Abul-Âs at once. Abul-Âs then hurried back to Makkah and sent Zainab ؓ to Al-Madinah at once. He accepted Islam six years [not six but three or four years] after this event.

### **Revengeful Enthusiasm of the Makkan Infidels**

In the wake of ignominious defeat at Badr, the Makkans held themselves back from mourning loudly, for to them, it would be honoring the victorious Muslims. Safwân bin Umayyah, whose father Umayyah and son Ali were both killed at Badr, persuaded Umair bin Wahb to go to Al-Madinah and assassinate Muhammad ﷺ.

Umair arrived at Al-Madinah with a poisonous sword. Umar bin Khattâb ؓ was in doubt and catching hold of him by the handle of his sword, took him to the Prophet ﷺ. Allâh's Messenger ﷺ said to him, "What are you here for?" "I have come to seek the release of my son who is among the captives of Badr, do mercy on me and get him released." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Why don't you speak the truth that Safwân has sent you to assassinate me?"

Afterwards he related the entire conversation held between Safwân and Umair. Umair declared without loss of time, "I accept Islam and

bear witness that you are truly the Messenger of Allāh, for our secret dealings were known to none except Safwān and me."

On the day of Badr, Allāh the Almighty helped the Muslims with His angels. The participation of angels in the battle was described by the polytheists on their return to Makkah and by those viewing the battle from a distance. They stated, "On the day of Badr, all of a sudden, we witnessed a piece of cloud passing over our heads towards the battle spot. The piece of cloud was producing the neighing sound of horses. We also heard someone say, "Hurry! Go ahead." This voice struck such terror in us that a cousin of mine fell down dead out of fear.

The battle of Badr being over, the Prophet ﷺ came back to Al-Madinah on Raḥmadān 22. This very year, during the last days of the current month, *Sadaqah Fitr* was made obligatory and the *Eid* prayers and the sacrifice of an animal (camel, cow or sheep) were also enjoined on the believers. The same year he married his next daughter Umm Kulthum ﷺ to Uthmān bin Affān ﷺ who came to be called Dhun-Nurain (the holder of two lights), and also gave the hand of his youngest daughter Fātimah ﷺ to Ali bin Abu Tālib ﷺ.

The flames of revenge were burning very strongly in the hearts of the defeated disbelievers of Makkah. Two months after the battle of Badr Abu Sufyān proceeded from Makkah at the head of a cavalry of two hundred men to give battle to the Muslims. When he drew near Al-Madinah the Prophet ﷺ was informed and came out with a band of Muslim combatants. But Abu Sufyān had already left after setting the some date orchards on fire and killing Saeed bin Amr Ansāri and his friend who were engaged in agricultural activities.

When Abu Sufyān heard of Muslims' arrival, the whole party took to their heels. They were in so much of a hurry that, in order to lighten their load, they threw away bags of food on the way. The Muslim troops gave them a very hot chase up to Kadr and found the food lying all over. Having abandoned the chase the Prophet ﷺ came back to Al-Madinah and the event came to be known as the expedition of Suwaiq. The type of food they abandoned is called *Suwaiq* in Arabic.

## The Third Year of Migration

It has already been mentioned that Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salul was to be installed as the king of Al-Madinah. But his plan failed as a result of the Prophet's arrival in Al-Madinah. Because of this he fostered enmity against the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. However, he was wise enough to keep his hateful feelings and hostile attitude a secret. Nevertheless he entered into heinous conspiracies with the Makkans against the Muslims. He tried hard to make the polytheists rise against the believers but was utterly defeated in his purpose. He grew so awe-stricken in the wake of the victory at Badr that he apparently accepted Islam but in truth he remained hostile to the Muslims. He also advised all the non-Muslims to follow in his footsteps and he himself played the role of their leader. The group of men his secret planning gave birth to, are called the *Munâfiqin* (hypocrites). Some Jews too joined his party and tried to benefit from the discord.

### Hostile Attitude of the Jews

The dominant position of the Muslims and the speedy spread of Islam was most undesirable to the Jews. Their hostility had far exceeded the enmity of Abdullah bin Ubai. They had their three strongest tribes on the outskirts of Al-Madinah with their separate fortifications. They were Banu Qainuqâ', Banu Nadir and Banu Quraizah. The agreement that the Prophet ﷺ had finalized immediately after his arrival in Al-Madinah, had brought all the Jewish tribes into its fold. The Quraish kept hatching plots with the Jews as they had been doing with Abdullah bin Ubai.

with him.

Since the Jews were antagonistic to the progress made by Islam, they had grown sympathetic to the Quraish and their efforts to curb the expansion of Islam. The Jews were enraged and disgruntled when they heard from Zaid bin Hârithah of the news of the Muslim victory at Badr. And Ka'b bin Ashraf violently reacted to this good news and remarked, "Woe to you! the Makkans are kings and the nobles of Arabia. If Prophet Muhammad has won victory over them, one will not be able to enjoy living on this earth."



When the news of the polytheist defeat was properly verified, Ka'b bin Ashraf left Al-Madinah and went to Makkah where he wrote elegies for the slain and began to sing them throughout Makkah. After igniting the fire of revenge among the Makkan disbelievers, he came back to Al-Madinah and left no stone unturned in flaying and decrying and mocking the Muslims.

The Jewish tribes were wealthy and practiced usury of the most destructive nature. The Aus and the Khazraj tribes of Al-Madinah were indebted to them and financially under their control. The Jews were also proud of their wealth and cunning, and therefore, looked at others as if they were foolish and ignorant. The honorable victory of the Muslims at Badr embarrassed them. They formed new alliances with Abdullah bin Ubai and his hypocrite followers in Al-Madinah, and the Quraish in Makkah. Foul words and abusive language were devices they used to soothe their mental agony. They also drew a dangerous plan to first ask the disbelievers to profess Islam without actually believing in it and then renounce it saying that they accepted Islam but found that it was not a sound religion. They wanted their abandoning of Islam to cause the other Muslims to turn back from their new faith leaving behind disorder and disruption.

Now the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions came across this very ugly situation. Allāh's Messenger ﷺ would visit the Jewish communities and go to their meetings and congregations to try to bring them around to the truth and to put matters right. He said to them, "You are fully aware of the fact that I am the true Messenger of Allāh and you were yourself awaiting the advent of a Messenger from Allāh the Almighty. It was your duty to testify to my Prophethood first before all others, and you should have looked into your heavenly Books in order to find the prophecies regarding me. But you are advancing on the path of rejection and opposition; do fear the wrath of Allāh otherwise you may suffer the same ignoble death and destruction that came to men like Abu Jahl, Utbah and the others at Badr." In response to these noble and wise words, they would lash out at Allāh's Messenger ﷺ saying: "The Quraish of Makkah were unaware of the strategies of battle. We shall teach you a lesson if and when you will face us, do not compare us with the Quraish of Makkah."



## **The Jewish Tribe—Banu Qainuqā'**

The Prophet ﷺ put up with the highly rude treatment meted out to him with exemplary patience and forbearance. Although these unprincipled and haughty Jews had broken their covenant, Allāh's Messenger ﷺ did not like to punish them. He preferred wise counseling and patience to their shocking rudeness and disrespectful behavior. Finally, their extreme ill-treatment and evil doing led them to the brink of disaster and their doom.

Once a fair was being held in the settlements of Banu Qainuqā'. A woman from the *Ansār* went there to sell milk. Following this, she went to a goldsmith's shop to buy an ornament. The Jewish goldsmith molested her. An *Ansāri* raised his voice in support of the woman in trouble. Jews from far and near assembled in no time and fell upon the Muslim which resulted in his martyrdom after he had also put a Jew to death. Other Muslims also reached the trouble spot but suffered attacks from armed Jews. The Prophet ﷺ received information in Al-Madinah. He reached there accompanied by the Companions but found the Jews armed and ready to fight. Fighting took place and seven hundred warriors of Banu Qainuqā' including three hundred armored men took refuge in their fort. Abdullah bin Salām ؓ belonged to Banu Qainuqā'. The Muslims laid siege to the fort, which continued for about a fortnight with the result they captured the fort along with everybody inside.

In accordance with the Arabian practice, the prisoners of war would be mercilessly put to death. The Makkans were amazed to see that among the captives of Badr, only two were killed as a result of their unbounded mischief and crimes. All others were left alive. Again, when seven hundred people were captured, they were expecting death. But Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salul, the head of the hypocrites and apparently a Muslim, interceded with the Prophet ﷺ for the safety of their lives. The Prophet ﷺ was a little hesitant about making the decision. At last Abdullah bin Ubai's repeated efforts materialized and safety was granted to all the prisoners. Thus Abdullah bin Ubai succeeded in his attempt to consolidate his friendly relation with the Jews.

Ka'b bin Ashraf has been referred to above. He grew bold enough to use the names of Muslim women in his love poems. The Muslims were much aggrieved with this state of affairs. Patience on the part of the Muslims emboldened the Jews to hatch a conspiracy for assassinating the Prophet ﷺ with the result he took care while going out at night. When the mischief of Ka'b bin Ashraf crossed all limits, Muhammad bin Maslamah ؓ, a Companion took permission to kill him. He then took a few friends with him and went to Ka'b bin Ashraf's house and killed him. In the wake of the murder of Ka'b bin Ashraf, another Jew, Salâm bin Abul-Huqaiq took up the gauntlet and exceeded his mischief. Since Ka'b bin Ashraf was killed by Banu Aus, Banu Khazraj took upon themselves the responsibility of doing away with his evil successor. Eight youngsters from Banu Khazraj took the route to Khaibar, killed Salâm bin Abul-Huqaiq there and escaped safe and sound.

### **The Battle of Uhud, 3 AH**

The contemptible defeat of the Makkans had infuriated them to the extreme, while the Jews and the hypocrites of Al-Madinah were making all-out efforts to light the fires of revenge. Furthermore, Hindah the wife of Abu Sufyân, whose father and brother were killed at Badr, was doing all she could to create a sense of shame at the ignominious defeat and loss of pride and prestige besides the loss of precious lives. Abu Sufyân who had achieved the status of undisputed chief after the large-scale massacre of the Quraish chieftains, started upon massive preparations to avenge the defeat.

The trade caravan which had returned from Syria prior to the battle of Badr, brought a huge profit of fifty thousand *Mithqâl* (*Mithqâl* is a kind of weight equaling 4.3 gm approx.) of gold and one thousand camels. But the goods, instead of being distributed among the shareholders, it was decided, were to be utilized for providing weapons and armor to the army that was burning with the rage of revenge. Poets were sent to other tribes of Arabia and they played their role in activating people to rise up to help the Makkans against the followers of Islam. As a result, all of Banu Kinânah and the people of Tihâmah came to their help besides other allies of the Quraish. *Ahbâsh* (the Abyssinians residing near

Makkah) were also enlisted for the purpose. Singers of military songs and the women were exciting the polytheist troops to strong action and were also to be brought to the front lines. The whole year was devoted to large-scale military preparations and they were aided and abetted by the Jews and the hypocrites at all levels.

A heavily armed troop of three thousand warriors proceeded to Al-Madinah at the beginning of the month of Shawwâl. Wives and daughters of the slain chieftains also accompanied the army to see with their own eyes the spectacle of the killers being killed. Poets were also fanning the fire of maddening anger and instigating the soldiers to storm into the settlement of the believers with new vigor. Hindah, the daughter of Utbah was the leader of the women's section as her husband Abu Sufyân was at the head of the Makkan army.

Jubair bin Mut'im had an Abyssinian slave named Wahshi who was skilled in the art of throwing lances and seldom missed his target. Jubair bin Mut'im promised to set him free if he killed Hamzah ؓ, while Hindah struck a deal with the same person that if he did away with Hamzah ؓ, she would give all of her jewelry to him.

The polytheist army reached near Al-Madinah. Being informed, the Prophet ﷺ summoned the Companions and asked them to give their advice about the fresh menace. Abdullah bin Ubai (the leader of the hypocrites), considered to be among the Muslims, was also present. The Prophet ﷺ was in favor of facing the enemy within the bounds of Al-Madinah. It was also because he had recently dreamt that a little portion of the edge of his sword had dropped and he inferred from this that an open encounter with the enemy might cause some loss. He had also dreamt that he had put his hand in armor. By armor he meant Al-Madinah. Abdullah bin Ubai also supported the view of fighting the enemy inside Al-Madinah and he felt he might have some advantage by this. However, the majority of the Companions favored the idea of facing the enemy outside of Al-Madinah. Although the old ones preferred to fight from inside Al-Madinah, the young ones differed and showed a burning desire to go out.

The 14th of Sha'bân was Friday. The consultations being over, the Prophet ﷺ led the Friday prayer and then came out of his house clad

in armor and armed with his weapons. Now it flashed into their minds that they had differed from his opinion and might, therefore, be overtaken by some calamity. They submitted, "You are at liberty to change your opinion into action and we are ready to follow suit." But the Prophet ﷺ kept to the majority opinion as he had no specific Revelation to follow. Moreover, he liked to satisfy the fervent desire of those who were restless enough to prove their mettle in the battlefield as they weren't able to display their valor in the battle of Badr.

Thus, leaving behind Umm Maktum ؓ in Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ moved onward at the head of one thousand soldiers.

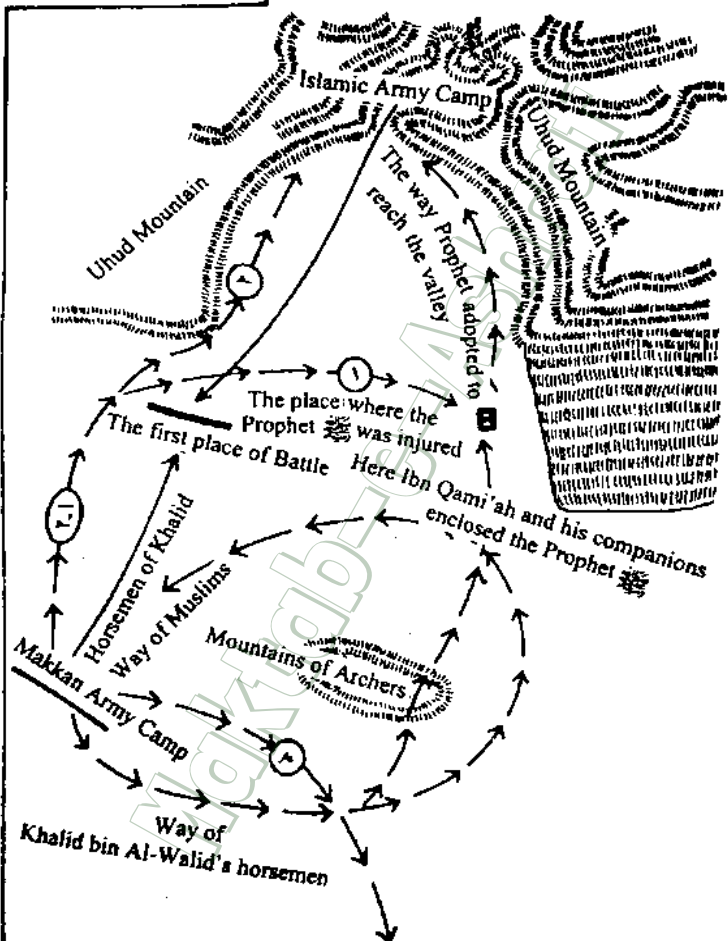
### Mischief of the Hypocrites:

In the morning, he reached near Uhud mountain, Abdullah bin Ubai, the wicked hypocrite, broke away with his three hundred followers pretending that since his opinion of fighting inside Al-Madinah was not accepted, he and his men would not take part in the battle. Now the Muslim army consisted of merely seven hundred fighters. The Prophet ﷺ had also returned the boys of young age before. Soon they arrived at the foot of Mount Uhud. The Makkan army had already pitched its tents there. The Prophet ﷺ encamped keeping Mount Uhud to their back. The next day, on Sha'bān 15, 3 AH, the battle broke out.

Before the battle, the Prophet ﷺ had put 50 archers under Abdullah bin Jubair ؓ at a mountainside and ordered them strictly to stay there until further order, without leaving the place whatever may be the condition. They were to obstruct the enemy if it comes on the Muslims from the rear.

The Prophet ﷺ then drew up his troops for battle, he appointed Zubair bin Al-Awwām ؓ as the commander of the right wing and Mundhir bin Amr ؓ was given the left wing of the army. Hamzah ؓ was put in as the advance guard, Mus'ab bin Umair ؓ was chosen as the standard-bearer of Islam and Abu Dujānah ؓ was fortunate enough to receive the Prophet's sword. Out of excessive joy he marched on giving an air of vanity. Thereupon the Prophet ﷺ

# Map of Uhud invasion



- 1) The way he adopted to reach the Prophet ﷺ
- 2) The way of the defeated ones ran to the foot of Uhud mountain after retrogression.
- 3) The way of the defeated ones adopted towards Al-Madinah after retrogression.

remarked: "Such gestures are disliked by Allāh, but it is permissible while facing the enemy on the battlefield."

The Quraish, on the other hand, set their ranks in order and put Khâlid bin Walid (still a disbeliever) as the commander of the right wing of their force with one hundred cavalry soldiers under his command. Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl (still a non-Muslim) was the commander of the left wing with an equal number of soldiers to lead. Banu Abdud-Dâr had been the standard-bearers of the Quraish army since the long past.

In order to get them excited, Abu Sufyân told them rudely that their performance in the battle of Badr brought them misfortune. They should keep it and fulfill its right otherwise it would be handed over to someone else. Banu Abdud-Dâr persistently kept the standard with them and promised to fight gallantly. The commander of the Quraish's archers was Abdullah bin Rabi'ah. The enemy force consisted of three thousand soldiers against seven hundred men in the Muslim camp.

### The Battle starts:

In the beginning of the battle, Abu Âmir came forward. He was a monk (belonging to the Aus of Al-Madinah) held in regard by his people. He had settled in Makkah after the arrival of the Muslims in Al-Madinah, and also accompanied the Makkan army to Uhud. He had claimed in Makkah that he would certainly call the Aus to his side right on the battleground. Thus he gave the call but was ruthlessly rebuked by the believing Aus and he was rejected. Following this, each side launched an attack against the other.

Hamzah bin Abdul-Muttalib and Abu Dujânah ﷺ fought with such matchless gallantry that the disbelievers lost courage. Abu Dujânah ﷺ fought with the Prophet's sword killing everybody that came up against him, and advanced deep into the enemy's ranks. Hindah bint Ubah, the wife of Abu Sufyân was within the range of his sword at that moment she screamed and Abu Dujânah ﷺ held his sword back for he did not like that the Prophet's sword be stained with the blood of a woman, so she was saved.

## Martyrdom of Hamzah bin Abdul-Muttalib ﷺ:

Hamzah ﷺ sprang into action with matchless valor and killed Talhah, the standard-bearer of the polytheists. He then went deep into the ranks killing and creating chaos and disorder. Wahshi, the Abyssinian slave, noticed him from a distance and then hid behind some rocks. While making a quick forward movement, Hamzah ﷺ came within the range of Wahshi and he flung his lance at him which pierced him from one side to the other.

Hanzalah ﷺ approached Abu Sufyân by breaking the cordon around him with his dashing charge but Shaddâd bin Aswad Laithi killed him before he could attack Abu Sufyân. Nadr bin Anas and Sa'd bin Ar-Rabi' ﷺ proved their mettle before being honored with martyrdom. Twelve standard-bearers of the Quraish army were killed one by one at the hands of Muslim fighters. The Quraish standard remained lying on the ground after the killing of Sawâb, their last standard-bearer, and none had the courage to pick it up after him. The massive Makkan army was routed and after a gradual retreat, they fled the field accompanied by their women who had taken a position to encourage their soldiers to fight fiercely and fearlessly.

## A Reversal:

The defeat of the polytheists and the victory of the Muslims left none in doubt of the outcome of the fierce battle. The fleeing of the polytheists and their standard lying on the ground for a long period created in the Muslim archer's hearts a zest and fervor to chase the escaping enemy. They did this in spite of their commander, Abdullah bin Jubair ﷺ trying to stop them from doing so until the Prophet ﷺ signaled them to join the attack. Khâlid bin Walid knew the importance of that mountain pass and he therefore, lost no time in storming into the open passage left by the Muslim archers. No one was there to stop the forward movement of the Makkan cavalry. Abdullah bin Jubair ﷺ was martyred on the spot. This sudden attack of the polytheists created a temporary confusion in the Muslim ranks and they stopped chasing the Makkan army.

The chaotic condition of the Muslim ranks emboldened Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl and Abu Sufyân to stop fleeing and they gathered their soldiers together to launch another attack on the Muslims while they were in a state of turmoil. Their sudden onslaught only added to the trouble and losses in Muslim ranks.

The Muslims were surrounded by a large numbers of polytheist fighters on different fronts. Mus'ab bin Umair ﷺ was standing by the Prophet ﷺ with the standard of Islam in his hand. Ibn Qami'ah Laithi, a noted fighter among the disbelievers made a violent attack and put Mus'ab bin Umair ﷺ to martyrdom. Since Mus'ab ﷺ resembled the Prophet ﷺ, he thought that Muhammad ﷺ was martyred. Ibn Qami'ah mounted a raised place and claimed that he had killed Muhammad ﷺ. This news sent a wave of great joy through the ranks of the polytheists and in a fit of rejoicing they indulged in jumping and dancing and felt very elated and encouraged. The Muslims were on the other hand, left shocked and stunned. Meanwhile Ka'b bin Mâlik ﷺ saw him and exclaimed loudly, "Muslims! Be happy, for the Prophet ﷺ is alive and perfectly safe and sound."

Following this, the Prophet ﷺ called in a loud voice, "O slaves of Allâh, come to me for I am the Messenger of Allâh." The Muslims rushed to him from far and near fighting and killing the disbelievers. The disbelievers also concentrated on the area where the Prophet ﷺ was surrounded by his Companions. Allâh's Messenger ﷺ was now the main target of the attack. Abdullah bin Shihâb Zuhri struck the Prophet ﷺ and injured his face, while Ibn Qami'ah hit his head so violently that two rings from the metal chain strap of the helmet put on by the Prophet ﷺ were driven into his cheek. Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ pulled out the rings one by one and two of his teeth were pulled out doing this.

### Moths at the Lamp of Prophethood:

Some of the devoted Companions circled around the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Dujānah ﷺ leaned over the Prophet ﷺ to shield him from arrows until many were stuck in his back. Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs, Abu Talhah, Zubair, and Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf ﷺ stood like rocks to guard him against the mounting onslaught of the enemy soldiers. Talhah ﷺ



used his hand as a shield to stop the sword attacks until it became motionless. Ziyâd bin Sakan Ansâri ؓ and five of his companions were martyred protecting the Prophet ﷺ. Amârah bin Ziyâd ؓ met the same fate. Umm Amârah ؓ whose real name was Nusaibah bint Ka'b, went following the Muslim troops just to see the spectacle of the battle. But when the situation turned against the Muslims, she rushed to be by the side of the Prophet ﷺ in those difficult and delicate moments. When Ibn Qami'ah attacked the Prophet ﷺ, she rushed forward like a flash of lightning and launched several attacks on the enemy of Islam with a sword. But he remained safe because he was wearing a double coat of mail. But his counter attack inflicted a deep injury on her arm near the shoulder.

### Stability of the Prophet ﷺ:

During the moments when the fighting was going strong, some wretched and callous person hurled a piece of stone at the Prophet ﷺ from a distance which injured his lip and smashed his lower tooth and he fell on his side into a ditch. Ali bin Abu Tâlib ؓ caught hold of his hand and Abu Bakr and Talhah ؓ lent their support in helping him out of the pit. When a small band of the Companions assembled near the Prophet ﷺ the enemy attack slowed down. The Companions, emboldened by the presence of the Prophet ﷺ, smashed their ranks and pushed them back. Now, he went on the nearby mountain along with a party of his Companions to give a fresh call to battle from a raised point. Abu Sufyân also tried to climb the mountain but his efforts were fruitless. When he made an attempt to get on a place higher than that of the Muslims, Umar bin Khattâb ؓ was ordered to fight Abu Sufyân and his band to push them back and he did it well with the support of his fellows.

Now the Muslim troops began to gather. The scattered Muslims got on the higher ground to be at the service of the Prophet ﷺ, and the disbelievers could not gather the courage to launch a fresh attack. However, a hard-core enemy, Ubai bin Khalaf who had planned from before to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ, made a bold charge at him. When the latter noticed him moving towards him on horseback, he said, "Let him come." He was about to make an attack when the Prophet ﷺ took a lance

from his Companion, Hārith bin Samma and thrust it in the neck of Ubai bin Khalaf, he scuttled off bewildered and embarrassed. He succumbed to his injury on his way back to Makkah.

Abu Sufyān said in a loud voice: "Is Muhammad among you?" "Don't make any reply," the Prophet ﷺ said to his Companions. "Is Abu Bakr among you?" he said again and got no reply. "Is Umar bin Khattāb among you?" he said and the reply was only silence. Then he said "It seems all of them have been killed." Now Umar bin Khattāb broke his silence in exasperation and answered back: "O enemy of Allāh! All are alive and you will meet your doom." Amazed to hear this he uttered with an air of vanity: "Glory be to Hubal!" The Prophet ﷺ asked Umar bin Khattāb to say in reply: "Allāh is the Highest and Most Great!" Having heard from Umar bin Khattāb, Abu Sufyān said: "We have the idol Uzza, while you have none." The Prophet ﷺ again directed Umar to say in reply: "Allāh is our Lord but yours is none." Thereafter Abu Sufyān said: "This battle equalized the score of Badr." Umar replied on the instruction of the Prophet ﷺ: "No, there is no equality at all, for those killed on our side have gone to Paradise and those on your side are lying in Hell." He then called out, "We shall meet again at Badr next year." The Prophet ﷺ asked Umar to reply: "Yes, it is an appointment between us."

Abu Sufyān then departed. The Prophet ﷺ sent Ali bin Abu Tālib after him to witness the manner they adopted in making their departure. If they put saddles on their camels and left their horses free they meant to depart to Makkah; if they got on their horses and did not saddle their camels they had a plan to attack Al-Madinah once again. And in view of their imminent attack, the Muslims should take the initiative in launching an attack. Ali went behind but returned in a short while with the news that the Makkans had left their horses free.

### A View of the Battleground:

The Prophet ﷺ then descended from the mountain peacefully and the task of burying the martyrs started. Sixty-five *Anṣār* and four *Muhājirin* in all were honored with martyrdom. The dead bodies of several martyrs were torn to pieces. Hindah bint Utbah, the wife of Abu Sufyān mutilated the body of Hamzah. She cut off his nose

and ears and made a slit in his chest, took out the liver and chewed it but could not swallow it. Safiyyah ؓ, the mother of Zubair bin Al-Awwām ؓ was the full sister of Hamzah ؓ. When she came forward to see her brother, the Prophet ﷺ asked her son to send her back so that she might not see her brother's dead body which had been mutilated. On being forbidden, she replied, "Why? I know that my brother has been mutilated. I have not come here for lamentation. I shall rather keep patience and seek forgiveness for him." Having heard this, the Prophet ﷺ gave her permission. She witnessed the body and pieces of liver of her brother lying on the ground. She exercised full-restraint and recited:

"We belong to Allāh and truly we shall return to Him." (2:156)

And sought for him forgiveness of Allāh and came back silently. For Mus'ab bin Umair ؓ, the standard-bearer of Islam, only a piece of coarse cloth could be found as a shroud for his burial. The cloth was so small that when his head was covered, his feet appeared and when his feet were covered, his head was exposed. At last, his head was covered and some reeds were put over his feet.

All other martyrs were buried in pairs in one grave without being given a bath. On the return from the battlefield to Al-Madinah, they came across Hamnah bint Jahsh ؓ, the wife of Mus'ab bin Umair ؓ. She was told about the martyrdom of her maternal uncle, Hamzah ؓ and she recited, "*Inna lillāhi wa inna ilaihi rāji'un.*" (2:156) She was then informed of the martyrdom of her brother, Abdullah bin Jahsh, she recited, "*Inna lillāhi...*" and at last, she was given the news of the martyrdom of her husband, Mus'ab bin Umair ؓ and she burst into tears. Hearing this the Prophet ﷺ remarked: "A woman loves her husband most of all."

A woman from the *Ansār*, whose father, brother and husband were honored with martyrdom, came out desperately when there was rumor in the air that the Prophet ﷺ has been martyred. From Al-Madinah in route to Uhud when someone said to her, "Your father has been martyred," she asked, "Tell me, is the Prophet ﷺ safe?" She was moving ahead when someone said, "Your brother has been martyred," but she said, "Tell me about the Prophet ﷺ." Then

someone said to her, "Your husband has been martyred." But she put the same question, "Is the Prophet ﷺ safe?" In the meantime the Prophet ﷺ was at a little distance from her and someone pointed out to her that he was coming. Having seen his noble face, the woman uttered, "All sufferings are insignificant if you are safe and sound."

On Abdullah bin Ubai's deserting the Muslim troops and on their number being reduced, some of the Companions submitted to the Prophet ﷺ to seek help from the Jews but he rejected the proposal. The Jews kept waiting the outcome of the battle in their safe dwellings. Mukhairiq, a person among the Jews told his people that they must lend support to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. "We can't fight for this is Saturday," they replied. "This is the fighting between the Prophet and the disbelievers, so Saturday can't stand in the way." He took his sword and pronounced that in case he was killed, all of his property should be given to Muhammad ﷺ and none should go against him. He joined the battle and was killed.

When the Prophet ﷺ came to know of this, he remarked, "He was the best of the Jews." A hypocrite named Hârith bin Suwaid accompanied the Muslims to the battlefield. When the battle broke out, he killed two Muslims Mujazziz bin Ziyâd and Qais bin Zaid ؓ and fled to Makkah. He returned to Al-Madinah after a couple of days and was killed by Uthmân bin Affân ؓ.

In this battle, the Muslim camp found the hypocrites in their true form and color. The next day, Sunday, the 16th of Shawwâl, 3 AH, the Prophet ﷺ issued orders that only those who were present at the battle of Uhud would accompany him in pursuit of the disbelievers. So every Muslim, who had fought at Uhud the day before, followed the Prophet ﷺ on his way out of Al-Madinah in spite of their fatigue and their wounds. The Prophet ﷺ camped with his followers at Hamra' Al-Asad, about 8 miles from Al-Madinah where he remained for three days.

At Rawha', it came across the polytheists minds that they had not won a victory. They said, "What will we say when we meet the people without any Muslim captives and without booty? Moreover, we are returning to Makkah in a state that our noted chieftains like

Walid bin Āsi, Abu Umayyah bin Hudhaifah, Hishām bin Abu Hudhaifah, Ubai bin Khalaf, Abdullah bin Humaid Asadi, Talhah bin Abu Talhah, Abu Saeed bin Abu Talhah and a few others, who were the famous chiefs of Quraish, have been killed." Pressed hard under the demand of his men, Abu Sufyān showed his inclination to attack Al-Madinah once again.

In this situation Ma'bad bin Abu Ma'bad passed through Rawha' and informed Abu Sufyān that Muhammad ﷺ had already come out of Al-Madinah with his army and they were already at Hamra' Al-Asad. Perhaps they will meet you very soon. With this news, great panic and confusion gripped the polytheists and they fled straight to Makkah for fear of their lives. Informed of the polytheists' scuttling off to Makkah in a state of embarrassment, the Prophet ﷺ returned to Al-Madinah.

This expedition is known as the expedition of Hamra' Al-Asad. This event sent tremendous terror into the hearts of the disbelievers and Al-Madinah was safe from another attack by this army. It is a grave mistake to think that the Muslims were defeated in the battle of Uhud. During the first phase of the battle, the disbelievers were routed but the mistake of the archers led them to stage a comeback. But after some casualties, the Muslim troops dominated the battle scene once again and the polytheists fled from the battlefield.

## The Fourth Year of Migration

### A Breach of Promise and Mischief-making

On Muharram 1, 4 AH, the Prophet ﷺ was informed that a large number of mischief-mongers of Banu Asad had assembled in Qatan under the leadership of Talhah bin Khuwailid and Salamah bin Khuwailid with the evil intent of launching an attack on Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ dispatched a detachment of 150 Muslim soldiers headed by Abu Salamah Makhzumi ؓ to punish them. But the enemies fled before Abu Salamah ؓ reached Qatan. The Muslim soldiers returned with some cattle of the culprits.

There is a place called Uranah near Arafât where Sufyân bin Khâlid Hudhali, a hard-core disbeliever was reported to be collecting people to attack Al-Madinah. When this news came pouring in, the Prophet ﷺ dispatched a detachment headed by Abdullah bin Unais. He made it to the destination undetected and managed to cut off the head of the leader and escape unhurt. After a long and arduous journey of eighteen days, he returned to Al-Madinah on Muharram 23, 4 AH, and laid the head at the feet of the Prophet ﷺ.

In Safar, 4 AH, by way of treachery, the Quraish of Makkah sent seven persons from the Adal and Qârah clans to the Prophet ﷺ saying that their people have decided to enter the fold of Islam so some persons should be sent to them to teach Islam. In response to the request, he sent ten teachers (six according to Ibn Khaldûn) headed by Marthad bin Abu Marthad Ghanawi ؓ or Âsim bin Thâbit bin Abu Aflah ؓ.

When this party reached Raji', a water spot, they unfolded their treachery and called in two hundred persons. When the Muslim party saw itself surrounded, they moved to the top of a hill and began to fight in self-defense. When the Muslim party could not be captured, the disbelievers played a trick but they could seize only two while the rest laid down their lives fighting fiercely.

Those two captured were Khubaib bin Adi and Zaid bin Dathina ؓ who were taken to Makkah. These two were kept hungry and thirsty for a couple of days in the house of Hârith bin Âmir. One day a little child of Hârith, while playing with a knife, drew near Khubaib ؓ. He had the child seated on his thigh and put the knife aside. This horrible sight made the mother cry in distress. Khubaib ؓ pacified the woman saying that he would never kill her child.

After a few days Safwân bin Umayyah purchased Zaid ؓ to avenge the killing of his father. The Makkans assembled to enjoy the spectacle of Zaid's murder. From among the spectators, Abu Sufyân stepped forward and said: "You are going to be killed in a state of hunger and thirst. Would you like to be with your family members while Muhammad is killed instead of you?" Zaid ؓ retorted "By Allâh, I would never like to be among my family members while even a thorn

pricks my Prophet ﷺ." Thereupon Abu Sufyân remarked: "Nobody ever had friends like those of Muhammad." Zaid was then put to martyrdom. Khubaib ؓ was taken by Hujair bin Abu Ihâb.

Khubaib ؓ was then brought for execution. He asked if he could offer two *Rak'ah* of prayer. Having performed the prayer in complete repose he said to them, "Were it not that you would think I have delayed out of fear of death, I would have prolonged the prayer." The executioners then sent him to his fate.

### **A Soul-shattering Incident**

Soon after, in Safar, 4 AH, Abu Bara' Âmir bin Mâlik bin Ja'far bin Kilâb bin Rabi'ah bin Âmir bin Sa'sa'ah called on the Prophet ﷺ. He invited him to accept Islam. But he neither confessed Islam nor abhorred it. However, he said, "I have some concern about my people. So let some of your people accompany me to the Najd to give my people the rudimentary teachings of Islam." "But I am apprehensive of the people of Najd," the Prophet ﷺ said. "You care not about the Muslims. I shall take them under my protection," Abu Bara' said.

The Prophet ﷺ sent Mundhir bin Amr Sâ'idi at the head of seventy Companions in all. When they arrived at a well Bir Ma'unah, lying between Banu Âmir and Banu Sulaim, a letter from the Prophet ﷺ came to Âmir bin At-Tufail through Harâm bin Milhân ؓ. This Âmir bin At-Tufail was the nephew of Abu Bara' Âmir bin Mâlik. He put Harâm bin Milhân to death without reading the letter. Then he incited the people to kill the Muslims. Banu Âmir refused but Banu Sulaim's clans Ri'l, Dhakwân and Usayyah carried out his wish. However, Abu Bara' Âmir bin Mâlik felt aggrieved that the incident took place in spite of the protection provided by him. He succumbed to his grief and died after a fortnight. Âmir bin At-Tufail took Amr bin Umayyah Damri ؓ with him as a captive. He was then set free after his beard was shaved on behalf of his mother who had vowed to free a slave.

He hurried to Al-Madinah and reported the event to the Prophet ﷺ. While in the way he killed two men taking mistakenly as enemies. In

a state of profound distress, the Prophet ﷺ invoked the curse of Allāh on the assassins, and Āmir bin At-Tufail died of plague.

### **Faithfulness to the Promise**

The two people killed by Amr bin Umayyah Damri on his way back to Al-Madinah, were under the protection of Muslims so their blood money had to be paid. The Prophet ﷺ himself went to hold consultations with Banu Nadir concerning the blood money as they had an agreement with the Muslims in this regard. The Prophet ﷺ went to the settlement along with Abu Bakr, Umar and Ali ؓ.

Banu Nadir apparently showed their interest in giving their share of blood money. They seated the Prophet ﷺ in the shade of the wall of their fortification and left the place pretending to collect people for the discussion. While away from the Prophet ﷺ, they conspired to kill the Prophet ﷺ by pushing a huge stone down on his head from the top of the fortification.

### **Mischief of the Jews**

With this plan in view, Amr bin Jahsh bin Ka'b got on the top of the citadel, but Allāh the Almighty informed His Prophet ﷺ of the plot through Revelation, with the result that he got up at once and came back to Al-Madinah accompanied by his Companions. When the Jews tried to call the Prophet ﷺ back, he rejected the offer point-blank saying, "You hatched a plan to kill me in such and such way, so you cannot be trusted any more." The Jews didn't even deny it nor did they show any sense of shame.

Having arrived in Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ wrote the Jews to finalize another agreement but they refused it. He again wrote them to either sign the agreement or leave the territory. But they agreed to nothing and got ready to fight the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ invaded their territory and the Jews retreated inside their fortress. The Prophet ﷺ laid siege around the fortification, which continued for a fortnight. Abdullah bin Ubai and the hypocrites of Al-Madinah assured the Jews of their unflinching support if they either fight or accept an exile.



## **Banishment of Banu Nadir**

However, the Jews conveyed to the Prophet ﷺ through Abdullah bin Ubai that they were ready to accept banishment provided they were granted safety of life. The Prophet ﷺ finally ordered them to put on their camels as much goods and belongings as they could, except the weapons, and leave the territory. They demolished their dwellings and broke even their earthen vessels and jars before taking leave. One section went to Khaibar and another one went to Syria and settled there. The rest of the goods and property were distributed among the *Muhājirin*, except for Abu Dujānah and Sahl bin Hanif ۞, who were from the *Ansār*, and received a share from the booty as they were extremely poor. Yāmin bin Umair and Saeed bin Wahb from the Jews accepted Islam, so their property remained intact. This expedition is known as the Expedition of Banu Nadir, it took place in Rabi' Al-Awwal, 4 AH. This was exactly six months after the battle of Uhud. *Sūrat Al-Hashr* (59) was sent down during this expedition.

## **The Expedition of Dhāt-ur-Riqā'**

During this period, news came constantly pouring in about Banu Muhārib and Banu Tha'labah of Ghatfān tribe that they were making large-scale preparations to wage a war against the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ proceeded to meet the enemy at the head of four hundred Companions, appointing Uthmān bin Affān ۞ the administrator of Al-Madinah. They had collected in an oasis and took to their heels on receiving the news of the arrival of the Muslim troops. No fighting took place. This expedition marched in Jumāda Al-Ula, 4 AH. It was named *Dhāt-ur-Riqā'* because the feet of the Muslim army were injured due to making a long and arduous journey through rocky lands and they had to wrap up their feet with rags.

## **Expedition to Sawfā**

While departing from Uhud, Abu Sufyān had fixed the next year to meet again on the battlefield of Badr and the Prophet ﷺ had accepted the challenge. The hypocrites of Al-Madinah sent Nu'aim bin Mas'ud

to Makkah to remind the Quraish of their challenge to the Muslims of Al-Madinah. Makkah was then in the grip of a famine. Abu Sufyân told Nu'aim that while he (Abu Sufyân) was making preparations for the battle, he should go back to Al-Madinah and report the massive preparations and readiness of the Makkans for the ensuing fight and so fill the hearts of the Muslims with terror. This was done in hope that they would hold back from coming out of Al-Madinah and in that way the battle would be deferred for a year. He made an offer of twenty camels in case the job assigned to him was accomplished.

Nu'aim came to Al-Madinah to do his deceitful job and began to tell of the massive battle preparations of the Quraish. The Muslims came to the Prophet ﷺ very concerned. Umar bin al-Khattâb called on the Prophet ﷺ and submitted, "Why are the Muslims so disturbed with the news from Makkah when you are a true Prophet of Allâh?" Thereupon the Prophet ﷺ said, "I will go to the battlefield of Badr in accordance with my promise even if there is not a single person to accompany me." Following this he made preparations to give battle to the disbelievers and set out towards Badr. An army of one thousand five hundred soldiers proceeded under his command.

Abdullah bin Rawâhah was appointed the administrator of Al-Madinah and Ali bin Abu Tâlib was made the standard-bearer of Islam. Although Abu Sufyân wanted to avoid the battle, the coming out of the Muslim troops from Al-Madinah forced him to proceed to the battlefield and he came with an army of two thousand soldiers. They were not carry anything but parched barley as provisions. The Makkans called it the Expedition of *As-Sawiq*.

Abu Sufyân had managed fifty horsemen to accompany his army. When the Makkan army reached Usfân, they found out that the Islamic troops numbered one thousand five hundred soldiers under a strong and solid command. They lost courage for they had already tasted defeat at the hands of armies much less in strength during the battles of Badr and Uhud. The disbelievers retreated with the excuse that they thought it unreasonable to do battle during a drought. When the Makkan army returned from Usfân, the women of Makkah tauntingly remarked: "Have you gone to eat *Sawiq*? Had you proceeded with an intent of fighting, why did you come back at all?"

The Prophet ﷺ waited for eight days at Badr but on the eighth day, Ma'bad bin Abu Ma'bad Khuzā'i gave him news that Abu Sufyān returned from Usfān to Makkah. After receiving this information, the Prophet ﷺ returned to Al-Madinah. This event took place at the end of Rajab, 4 AH. Although the Muslims didn't get any booty, they did take full advantage of the fair, which was held at Badr during those days. The Prophet ﷺ came back to Al-Madinah in Sha'bān, Husain bin Ali bin Abu Tālib ؑ was born the same year and wine was declared as prohibited. Other events of the year were: the deaths of Abdullah bin Uthmān bin Affān ؑ, the maternal grandson of the Prophet ﷺ, Zainab bint Khuzaimah and Fātimah bint Usaīd, the mother of Ali bin Abu Tālib. Moreover, the Prophet ﷺ married Umm Salamah ؑ after the death of her husband, Abu Salmah Makhzumi.

### The Fifth Year of Migration

On return from the second expedition to Badr the Prophet ﷺ remained in Al-Madinah for a period of six or seven months and nothing significant took place during this span. In the beginning of Rabi' Al-Awwal, 5 AH, the Prophet ﷺ got the news that Ukaidir, the Christian ruler of Dumat-ul-Jandal, had collected a massive army to invade Al-Madinah and they also used to plunder the trade caravans on the way to Syria. Since this new enemy could prove itself formidable and the hypocrites, the Jews and other Arabian tribes around Al-Madinah could aggravate the trouble for the Muslims, the Prophet ﷺ thought it fit to stop the menace quickly. Appointing Sibā' bin Arfatah Ghifāri ؑ the administrator of Al-Madinah, he ﷺ set out with an army of one thousand soldiers. Dumat-ul-Jandal lay at a distance of five stages from Damascus and ten stages from Al-Madinah. A man from Banu Adhrah was taken to show the way. During this journey they would move during the night and rest during the day. When Dumat-ul-Jandal remained at a distance of one night's journey, the guide said, "The meadow of the enemy is at hand. It is better to seize their cattle." The Prophet ﷺ permitted this action. Informed of the arrival of the Muslim army, Ukaidir, the ruler of Dumat-ul-Jandal fled in a state of great terror. The Prophet ﷺ halted there for a few days and dispatched detachments to the surrounding areas but no one came to face them.

## **Expedition to Banu Al-Mustaliq**

On return from Dumat-ul-Jandal, the Prophet ﷺ took to his mission of teaching and training the Companions peacefully and single-mindedly. But, during Sha'bân, 5 AH, news came that the chief of Banu Al-Mustaliq, Hârith bin Abu Dirâr was making preparations for waging war on Al-Madinah and was also contacting other tribes to be a party to his plan. The Prophet ﷺ sent Buraidah bin Husaib Aslami ؓ on the mission of collecting information about their real intention. He came back with the news that Hârith bin Abu Dirâr was bent upon overthrowing Islam and the Muslims and he had brought many tribes to his side.

The Prophet ﷺ ordered the Muslims to rise to the occasion without loss of time. Appointing Zaid bin Hârithah ؓ as the administrator of Al-Madinah, he moved forward at the head of an army consisting of thirty horses, ten of the *Muhâjirin* and twenty of the *Ansâr*. The *Muhâjirin* and *Ansâr* were given separate standards, the standard of the *Ansâr* was given to Sa'd bin Ubâdah ؓ and that of the *Muhâjirin* was handed over to Abu Bakr ؓ, while Umar bin Khattâb ؓ was appointed commander of the advance guard. Since Abdullah bin Ubai had witnessed the Muslims victorious in the past, he along with his group of the hypocrites joined the Muslim army with a great desire for the booty.

Since these hypocrites called themselves Muslims, they enjoyed all the Islamic rights of a Muslim, and so, they could not be debarred from taking part in the battles. This was the first occasion when the hypocrites joined the Muslim camp for fighting. Hârith bin Abu Dirâr had sent a spy who was caught by the Muslim troops and brought before the Prophet ﷺ. When being a spy was proved beyond doubt and he also rejected the offer of coming to the fold of Islam, then according to the Arabian practice he was put to death. When Hârith got the news of the killing of his spy, he felt worried and embarrassed.

At last Umar bin Khattâb ؓ was ordered to go ahead and invite them to accept Islam, and he did the job adequately. But their response was

rude and harsh. Following this, both the sides fell upon each other. The standard bearer of the disbelievers was killed by Abu Qatādah ؓ and with his fall, the disbelievers ran off. Among the captives was Juwairiyah, the daughter of the commander of the army, besides booty was taken in a very large quantity. Muraisi', where the battle took place, was at a distance of nine stages from Al-Madinah.

### Mischief of the Hypocrites:

On the return journey, the hypocrites made an attempt to create bad blood between the *Muhājirin* and the *Ansār*. Abdullah bin Ubai highlighted the issue of the *Muhājirin* and the *Ansār*. He went to the extent that he pronounced: "When we return to Al-Madinah, those who are worthy and noble, will drive out the unworthy wretches."

One more event that should be mentioned took place during this journey. 'Aishah bint Abu Bakr ؓ was also present on this journey. The army made a halt at one stage when resuming the journey. Her litter was set on the camel without her because, at the time, she was away answering the call of nature. The man who set the litter thought that 'Aishah ؓ was inside it. She was delayed because a pearl necklace she wore was entangled in a bush and the pearls were scattered. Since the necklace belonged to her sister, she was more particular about collecting them. In the meantime the army moved off. When she returned she found nobody there. She grew very anxious.

Meanwhile, Safwān bin Mu'attal ؓ emerged slowly from behind. He was assigned the duty of looking after all the gear and as a rear guard. Now when he came on the scene he was dumb-founded to see the Mother of the believers. He at once got down from his camel, and seated 'Aishah ؓ on it and moved ahead holding its halter. He caught up with the Muslim army on the way. When they came to know of this incident, they expressed immense sorrow over it. But the wicked hypocrites had a golden opportunity to capitalize on the incident and created a storm in the Muslim camp.

Filled with tremendous despair, 'Aishah ؓ went to live with her father in such a state of gloom that the believers as a whole were thoroughly convinced of her innocence and piety. Approximately one month after

this incident, Revelation came down vindicating her completely. Thus 'Aishah ؓ was strongly and firmly declared as 'truthful'.

The ever expanding mischief of Abdullah bin Ubai and particularly the latest incident became intolerable for the believers, and one Companion requested the Prophet ﷺ to do away with the scourge. But the Prophet ﷺ declined saying: "Since Abdullah bin Ubai outwardly proclaims himself a Muslim, killing him will encourage some people to say that Muhammad has now started killing his friends." When his son, Abdullah bin Abdullah bin Ubai came to know that his father had proved himself worthy of being killed, he called on the Prophet ﷺ. He said, "Let the task of killing my father, Abdullah bin Ubai be assigned to me so that I, by beheading him, will establish beyond a doubt that Islam is more valuable than a father." "No, I don't want to kill Abdullah bin Ubai," the Prophet ﷺ emphatically said. However, Abdullah ؓ stopped his father Abdullah bin Ubai at the entrance to Al-Madinah declaring, "You are a hypocrite and I will not allow you to enter Al-Madinah." When the Prophet ﷺ came to know of this, he issued an order to let Abdullah in.

### Release of the Captives:

Juwairiyah, the daughter of Hârith, the chief of Banu Al-Mustaliq was given to Thâbit bin Qais ؓ. In the meantime Hârith himself came to Al-Madinah to seek the release of his daughter. He ؓ himself paid the ransom and set her free. But Juwairiyah refused to accompany her father and showed her eagerness to be at the service of the Prophet ﷺ instead. Thus he took her hand in marriage with the ready consent of her father. In the wake of this marriage, the Companions set all the prisoners of Banu Al-Mustaliq free saying that those entering into relation with the Prophet ﷺ could not be kept as captives. The spoils of war were also given back to them. Thus enmity with a tribe was changed into love simply because of this marriage.

### Reproving the Jews:

It is a fact that the Banu Nadir had aggravated their mischievous activities right from the day they had been banished from Al-Madinah. It was only because of their nefarious plans that the

polytheists and the Jewish tribes of Arabia rose against the believers. The matter took such a turn that all Arabian tribes even the Christian forces at the Syrian frontiers began to look upon the Muslims as a danger to their peace and solidarity. As a result of all this, the Prophet ﷺ had grown very cautious regarding their hostile activities and never failed to dispatch detachments wherever danger seemed lurking.

### **Gharwah Khandaq**

Hua'i bin Akhtab was the biggest habitual troublemaker among Banu Nadir who had settled in Khaibar along with the larger section of the Jews who were banished from Al-Madinah. Hua'i bin Akhtab, Salâm bin Abul-Huqaiq, Salâm bin Mishkam and Kinânah bin Ar-Rubaiyi' were the prominent chieftains of Banu Nadir. They along with Hud bin Qais and Abu Umârah, the chieftains of Banu Wâ'il, went to Makkah and started raising funds for another battle and the Quraish made lavish contributions to it. After collecting huge amounts of wealth and exciting the people to the extreme, they went the Ghatfân clans and played the same role there. Banu Kinânah also jumped on the bandwagon. Finally they made contacts with Banu Quraizah of Al-Madinah who were still bound to help the Muslims according to the pact signed by both the parties. Banu Sulaim, Fazârah, Ashja', Banu Sa'd and Banu Murrah, and the chieftains of the Quraish, Banu Nadir and Ghatfân that were not less than fifty in number, all went to the Ka'bah and vowed to fight against the Muslims as long as they lived.

They maintained great caution and tight security in view of their past experiences, so the Prophet ﷺ did not receive any news about this greatest conspiracy hatched against Islam until it was too late for the Muslims to do anything.

According to their plan, Abu Sufyân set out from Makkah at the head of four thousand soldiers collected from the allied tribes. At Marr-az-Zahrân the troops of Banu Sulaim also joined the Makkan army; other of their allies kept on joining on the way. Hua'i bin Akhtab was the chief of Banu Nadir, and the chief of the Ghatfân tribes was Uyainah bin Hisn, while Abu Sufyân was the commander in chief of the allied forces.

Coming close to Al-Madinah, the total number of the allied forces came at least to ten thousand or twenty-four thousand according to some narratives. It consisted of four thousand five hundred camels and three hundred horses.

When the Prophet ﷺ received news of their nefarious design to invade Al-Madinah, he called a meeting to decide on how to face an enemy with far superior numbers and weaponry. They all agreed to fight a defensive war. Salmân Fârîsî (the Persian) ؓ is reported to have said, "When we feared a charge by the cavalry, we used to dig trenches to keep the invaders at bay." The Prophet ﷺ agreed to his suggestion and decided to have a trench dug in the open ground lying to the north of Al-Madinah.

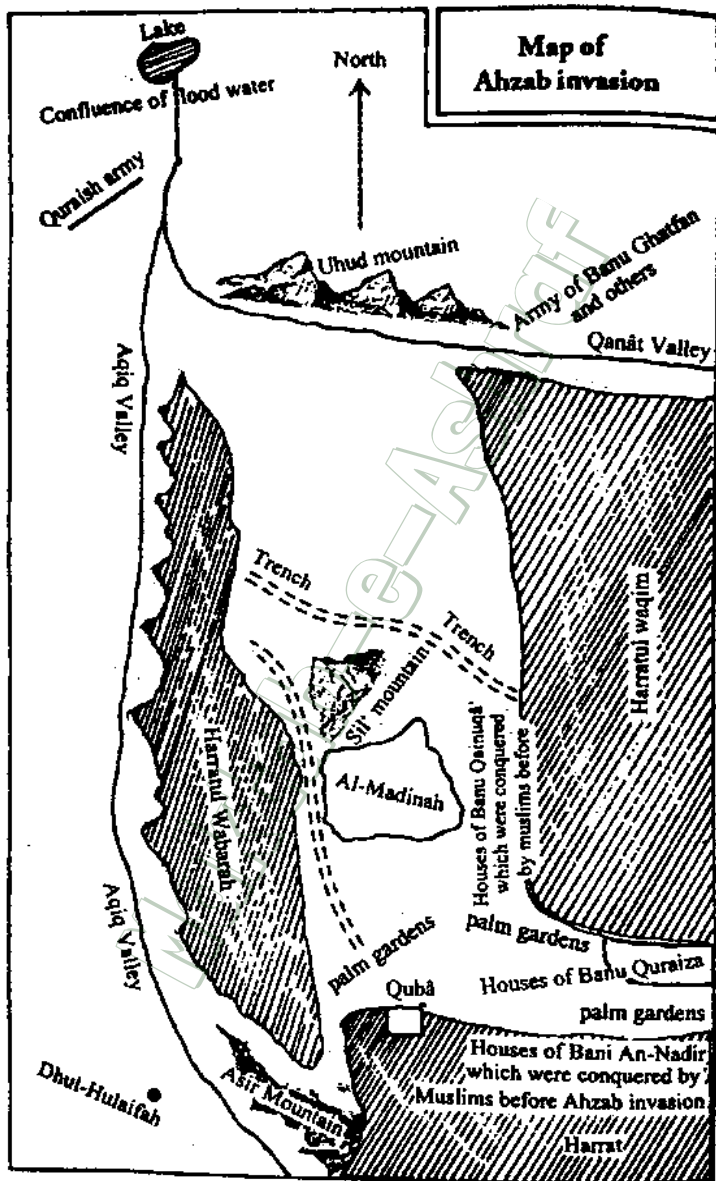
The city was exposed only on that side and was well-protected to the west, south and east by large plantations of date palms, volcanic rocky plains and granite hills presenting considerable obstacles to the progress of a mounted enemy. This was, in fact, the fort of the Muslim troops. In the middle, the Prophet ﷺ pitched his camp. The trench was dug five yards wide and five yards deep. Groups of ten persons were each assigned the task of digging a part of the trench after equal division of the whole area. The Prophet ﷺ was performing the same work along with his loving Companions.

A large rock was causing great difficulty in digging the trench for it could not be broken by the pick. When the Prophet ﷺ was informed, he dropped down into the trench and gave such a blow with the pick that the rock was split and a glowing light came out of it. He ﷺ said, "Allâhu Akbar (Allâh is the Most Great), the keys of Syria have been given to me." With the second blow of the pick, the Prophet ﷺ split another portion of rock and said, "Allâh is the Most Great, the keys of Persia have been given to me." On the third attempt the remaining portion of the rock was broken to pieces. The Prophet ﷺ then said, "Allâh is the Most Great, I have been given the keys of Yemen." He then added, "Jibrîl the trustworthy has given me glad tidings that all these countries will be under the possession of my Ummah."

At a time when the Muslims were making a desperate effort to save their lives against an army of twenty-four thousand strong and when



# Map of Ahzab invasion



all of Arabia seemed to be thirsty for their blood, glad tidings of the conquest of Persia, Rome and Yemen were given to the Muslims. No one but Allāh the Almighty Alone could do such a thing.

Meanwhile news came to the Prophet ﷺ that even Ka'b bin Usaid, the chieftain of Banu Quraizah had joined hands with the invaders and Hua'i bin Akhtab had made a friendly entry into the citadel of Banu Quraizah to rouse them against the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ sent Sa'd bin Mu'adh and Sa'd bin Ubadah to Banu Quraizah to bring them back to their senses but in vain. In reply to the polite and sensible approach, they very harshly replied that they knew of no Muhammad nor did they have any commitment with him.

When the enemy troops drew near, they exclaimed in amazement at the sight of the trench for it was a new experience for the Arabians. They laid siege of Al-Madinah. It was the most tremendous show of military power and strength on the part of the polytheists. The Muslims had managed to send their women and children to a nearby citadel. A sudden attack by the Jews, who happened to be within the bounds of Al-Madinah, was looming large over the Muslims of Al-Madinah. The hypocrites could prove even more injurious as they were always mixing with them.

Many times the disbelievers tried to cross the trench but failed. They inspected the trench and, at last, found out a spot where it was narrowest and their horses jumped over the moat and carried their riders into the territory of Al-Madinah. One of these was the well-known warrior, Amr bin Abd Wadd who was considered a match for two thousand horsemen. Ali bin Abu Tālib ﷺ cut off his head with a sweeping slash of his scimitar. The rest who had stormed the trench with him darted back on their horses. Then the actual fight started and both sides got engaged in an exchange of arrows, which would continue from morning till evening. This siege lingered on for about a month, which was very difficult and troublesome. The enemy camp was getting reinforcements from outside supporters but the Muslims were deprived of any such help.

Once a Companion complained to the Prophet ﷺ of being exhausted by hunger, and showed him his stomach on which he had tied a slab

of stone to keep himself straight and active. The Prophet ﷺ then showed him his own belly on which he had tied two slabs of rock.

Since they were constantly under the fear of being sniped at by the enemy, the Muslims used to keep guard the whole night under the open sky besides being engaged in facing the enemy the whole day. Mus'ab bin Qushair, a hypocrite, tauntingly remarked: "Though the Prophet is giving Syria, Iran and Yemen to his Companions, I see in fact that they are now unable to even live in Al-Madinah. Some of them used to say, "They cannot even go out to answer the call of nature but see the dream of conquering the empires of Caesar and Chosroes.

The Muslims were in a state of a long-drawn-out siege. They were facing the scorching sun in the day, hunger, the lurking danger of an enemy charge any time, and the nefarious activities of Banu Quraizah and the hypocrites of Al-Madinah.

Mounting pressure of enemy power and strength on one hand, and the lack of men and material on their side, the Muslims were so determined and dauntless that whenever they were asked to accept peace at the cost of their honor, they rejected the offer totally. Even in such a period of distress and desperation, noble and fortunate souls were coming into the fold of Islam.

Suddenly one day Nu'aim bin Mas'ud belonging to the Ghatfân tribe, came to the Prophet ﷺ breaking away from the enemy camp and embraced Islam. He then said that he had a mission to sow the seed of discord between Banu Quraizah and the Makkan army. Thus, he first went off to Banu Quraizah and then to Abu Sufyân and talked in a way that both of them grew doubtful of each other. As a result of this, Banu Quraizah held back from lending any concrete and meaningful support to the Quraish. Both the parties gave their ear and attention to what Nu'aim said to them, for his acceptance of Islam was still a secret. When the siege had lasted over 27 days, a violent windstorm uprooted the tents of the polytheists and overthrew their cooking pots.

"We sent a hard gale and such an army they could not witness." (33:9)

Their fires were put out in their camps and the polytheists took it as an ill omen. The polytheists were so much overpowered by fear and frustration that they scuttled off in the darkness of night.

Allāh the Almighty Himself sent to His Prophet ﷺ the news that the bewildered polytheists had fled. Thereupon the Prophet ﷺ sent Hudhaifah bin Al-Yamān ؓ to bring the news, he gave the glad tidings that the enemy departed leaving no trace behind. The Prophet ﷺ remarked, "The Quraish shall not come at you after this year." The Muslims returned to Al-Madinah overwhelmed with joy. This event took place in Dhul-Qa'dah, 5 AH. Ibn Umm Maktum ؓ was appointed the administrator of Al-Madinah in the absence of the Muslims. On returning to Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ halted there only for a short while and said after offering *Zuhr* prayer that the 'Asr prayer would be performed in the locality of Banu Quraizah. So, the Muslims proceeded on to Banu Quraizah before laying their arms aside.

### **Banu Quraizah's Breach of Trust**

Sa'd bin Mu'adh ؓ who had been sent to Banu Quraizah during the Battle of Trench to bring them back to their senses, was treated rudely by them. He was hurt by an arrow during the battle of Trench. Due to his wound he did not join the expedition to Banu Quraizah. The Prophet ﷺ handed over the standard to Ali bin Abu Tālib ؓ and sent him ahead as the advance guard. Hua'ī bin Akhtab was present in the fort of Banu Quraizah and was engaged in rousing them against the Muslims. The Muslims besieged the fort of Banu Quraizah and the siege continued for 25 days.

The chief of Banu Quraizah was Ka'b bin Asad. When he saw that his people were unequal to face the charge of the Muslim troops, he assembled them all at one place. He said, "There can be no doubt about Muhammad being the Prophet of Allāh, for our heavenly Book carries clear and unequivocal prophecies about him and whose advent we have been waiting for. It appears fitting that we believe in him and thus safeguard our lives and our property." But the Banu Quraizah opposed this proposal tooth and nail. Ka'b bin Asad put forward another suggestion then and said, "Kill your women and

children first and then go out of the fort and give a fierce battle. If victory is won, women and children can be had again, and if defeated and killed, it will be a death of honor." Banu Quraizah rejected this offer too. Ka'b bin Asad presented a third alternative and said, "Snipe at the Muslims on the night of Sabbath when we are not permitted to launch any invasion or carry out killing activities, the Muslims will be careless on this night and thus incur heavy losses." But they refused to agree to this proposal also for they did not like to violate the sanctity of Sabbath.

Meanwhile, three persons from Banu Quraizah named Tha'labah bin Saeed, Asad bin Ubaid and Usaid bin Saeed, confessed Islam. A man named Amr bin Sa'd said, "I admit that my people have committed a breach of trust and I cannot become a party to it." Saying this he left the fort.

At last one morning, they sent a message to the Prophet ﷺ that they would like to surrender on condition that Sa'd bin Mu'adh ؓ was allowed to suggest the punishment for them. He ؓ accepted the proposal. After Banu Quraizah consigned themselves to the Muslims, the Muslim *Ansār* of Banu Aus called on the Prophet ﷺ and submitted: "On the eve of the battles between the Aus and the Khazraj, Banu Quraizah would side with the Aus. You have set Banu Qainuqâ' free in accordance with the will of the Khazraj. It is our turn now, please appoint from us a judge to decide the fate of Banu Quraizah." The Prophet ﷺ said, "I have already appointed Sa'd bin Mu'adh, the chief of the Aus to deliver his judgment about Banu Quraizah, while Banu Quraizah has also suggested his name for the role." Hearing this the Aus expressed utmost joy.

At the same moment they left for the Prophet's Mosque where Sa'd bin Mu'adh ؓ was undergoing treatment for his injuries. They brought him to the Muslim troops. On the way they kept pressing Sa'd bin Mu'adh ؓ to make concession for Banu Quraizah. However, he told one and all that he would do nothing but justice. When Sa'd bin Mu'adh ؓ approached, the Prophet ﷺ asked the *Ansār* to get up and pay regards to their chief. When he was told that the Prophet ﷺ had entrusted to him the matter of Banu Quraizah, his old allies, Sa'd ؓ turned to his people and said, "Tell me by an oath to Allāh that

you will accept my judgment with pleasure and without any objection to it." All of them expressed their total agreement. Sa'd bin Mu'adh ؓ put the same question to the Prophet ﷺ and the *Muhājirin*, and they all agreed to abide by his judgment. Now Sa'd bin Mu'adh ؓ delivered his judgment: "I enjoin that all the men of Banu Quraizah be put to death and their wives and children be treated like prisoners of war while their wealth and properties be divided among the Muslims." Following this judgment Banu Quraizah were ordered to come out of the fort and they were all brought to Al-Madinah in custody. At last, following the judgment, their men were killed and their dwellings were given to the Muslims.

### Incidents during 5 AH

In Dhul-Hijjah, 5 AH, Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrāh ؓ proceeded to see coast area at the head of three hundred Companions under the order of the Prophet ﷺ to make an inquiry into the affairs of the Juhainah tribe, for distressing information was pouring in about them. Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrāh ؓ and his commandos had to bear untold miseries due to a shortage of food and drink. They had to survive on two or three dates a day. While they were along the shore, a huge fish was thrown up on the beach, which fed them for many days.

About Banu Kilāb it was reported that they were determined to raid and plunder Al-Madinah. In the same month of Dhul-Hijjah, 5 AH, Muhammad bin Maslamah ؓ set out with a party of thirty Muslims. Banu Kilāb moved forward to take on the Muslims but tasted a sweeping defeat and took to their heels leaving behind ten dead and fifty camels and three thousand goats as booty.

Similarly, Ukāshah bin Mihsan ؓ was sent to Makkah to look into the state of affairs, while a small party was dispatched to Najd, which returned to Al-Madinah with Thumamah bin Uthāl as a captive, who embraced Islam wholeheartedly. He then went back to his territory, Yamamah, and prevented the caravans from carrying food grains to Makkah. The people of Makkah were so hard pressed by the ban imposed by Thumamah ؓ that they wrote to the Prophet ﷺ requesting him to get the ban lifted. The Prophet ﷺ asked Thumamah ؓ to allow the supplies of food grains to reach Makkah.

## The Sixth Year of Migration

It has already been mentioned among the events occurring in 5 AH that on the occasion of the Prophet's return from the expedition to Dumat-ul-Jandal, Uyainah bin Hisn had requested him to allow grazing of his camels in the meadows of Al-Madinah. He was allowed the opportunity for one year. But that thankless fellow paid back by raiding the pasture of the Prophet's camels, killed a man from Banu Ghifar and carried away his wife along with the camels of the Prophet ﷺ.

Salamah bin Amr bin Akwa' was the first to know of this incident. He raised the alarm, collected a small band and gave them hot chase. Salamah's loud voice made the Prophet ﷺ also to go behind the culprits. Shortly after his departure, Miqdād bin Al-Aswad, Abbād bin Bishr, Sa'd bin Zaid, Ukāshah bin Mihsan, Muhriz bin Fadālah Asadi, and Abu Qatādah followed suit and joined the Prophet ﷺ. He appointed Sa'd bin Zaid as the head of the party and sent him ahead and he himself halted at the stream of Dhu Qirad.

Salamah bin Amr caught the miscreants. The pursuers were strengthened by reinforcements, and both the parties set themselves against one another. The Muslims captured their camels besides regaining their own camels. They returned to the Prophet ﷺ at Dhu Qirad. The Prophet ﷺ slaughtered a camel from among the captured ones, and left for Al-Madinah after a night's halt.

In the same year, news reached the Prophet ﷺ that Banu Bakr had entered into a conspiracy with the Jews of Khaibar to invade Al-Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ sent Ali bin Abu Tālib at the head of two hundred soldiers to deal with Banu Bakr.

On the way, the Muslim army captured a spy of Banu Bakr who disclosed the concentration points of the enemy troops on a promise of his safety. He was set free as promised. Ali bin Abu Tālib made a sudden dashing charge against the enemies and they took to their heels after a fierce encounter. The Muslims collected five hundred camels and two thousand goats as booty.

## **Preaching of Islam**

In Sha'bān, 6 AH, the Prophet ﷺ sent Abdur-Rahman bin Auf ؓ to the surrounding areas of Dumat-ul-Jandal to preach Islam to the people of those areas who were still disbelievers. One of their chieftains, Asbagh bin Umar Kalbi was a Christian. With the efforts of Abdur-Rahman bin Auf ؓ, Asbagh accepted Islam and the majority of the tribe followed suit. Some other chieftains, who declined to accept Islam, got ready to pay the *Jizyah* (a tax levied on non-Muslims to compensate their not taking part in armed defense of the Muslim community). Tamādar, the daughter of Asbagh was married to Abdur-Rahman bin Auf ؓ and she gave birth to Abu Salamah who rose to be among the greatest Islamic legal experts.

## **A Criminal Event**

A few persons from Ukl and Urainah tribes who seemingly confessed Islam, expressed their desire to settle in Al-Madinah. But, after a few days, they complained of the unfavorable climate of Al-Madinah and became sick. The Prophet ﷺ sent them to the north of Uhud where his own camels were grazing. When they became strong and stout, they mercilessly killed Yasār, who was taking care of the camels, and made off with the camels. When this tragic news reached Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ sent Kurz bin Jābir Al-Fihri behind them with twenty horsemen and they caught the culprits on the way and they were returned to Al-Madinah and put to death there.

## **The Truce of Hudaibiyah**

Although the religion of Ibrahim (Abraham) ؑ was part of the culture all over Arabia, the people had become immersed in polytheism and idol-worship, they all still held the Ka'bah in high esteem and performed the *Hajj* most regularly. They also stopped fighting during the days of *Hajj*. In the month of Shawwāl, 6 AH, the Prophet ﷺ had a dream that he was entering the Ka'bah along with his Companions. The Muslims had a great desire to visit Ka'bah and the dream deepened this urge. The Prophet ﷺ decided to visit the Ka'bah to perform *Umrah* (the lesser



pilgrimage) and he left Al-Madinah for Makkah in Dhul-Qa'dah, 6 AH, with one thousand four hundred Companions and seventy sacrificial camels. They were all in *Ihrām*. Coming as pilgrims symbolized their peaceful intentions and the Makkans also had no right to prevent the Muslims from visiting the Ka'bah.

Having arrived at Dhul-Hulaifah, the Prophet ﷺ sent as a precaution a man from the Khuzā'ah tribe to check the situation. He came back and informed the Prophet ﷺ that the Quraish had collected a large number of people to stop the Muslims from reaching the Ka'bah. The Prophet ﷺ consulted the Companions. Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه said, "We have come here for performing *Umrah* and not for fighting. But, if someone stands between the House of Allāh and us, then we must fight against them." Having heard this, the Prophet ﷺ ordered the Muslims to proceed on. The Quraish had already sent Khālīd bin Walīd with a squad of cavaliers to Kura' Al-Ghamim to stop the movements of the Muslims towards the Ka'bah. The Prophet ﷺ took a route towards the right evading the main route and all of a sudden, they passed western side of Khālīd bin Walīd. Now he, frightened to the extreme, galloped off on his horse to Makkah to update them of the imminent danger at hand. The Prophet ﷺ, on the other hand, reached the hilly range below which starts the surrounding areas of the city of Makkah. His dromedary sat down there. The people around remarked: "The dromedary has played foul." Thereupon the Prophet ﷺ retorted, "The dromedary has not played foul, but she is prevented by the One Who has prevented elephants to enter the city."

### Position of Hudaibiyah:

The Prophet ﷺ did not think it proper to launch an attack on Makkah and the House of Allāh for those were the areas where fighting was prohibited by Allāh. He ﷺ then chided the dromedary and it got up and moved on. The Prophet ﷺ halted at the well of Hudaibiyah. The well was deficient in water which ran short in no time. When the people were on the brink of facing trouble, the Prophet ﷺ took out an arrow from his quiver and gave it to Bara' bin Āzib رضي الله عنه to drop it in the well. With the dropping of the arrow, water in the well flowed in such a great quantity that the Muslim army no longer had a scarcity.

When the Prophet ﷺ got set at Hudaibiyah, Budail bin Warqa' Khuzā'i came with a number of men and asked the purpose behind the arrival of the Muslims. He ﷺ said, "Don't you see the rows of sacrificial camels ahead of the caravan and notice us in *Ihrām*?" Hearing this he went away and said to the Quraish, "You are unnecessarily raising an alarm about Muhammad. He has come here with the sole intention of visiting the House of Allāh, not for fighting with you." The mischievous among the Quraish said, "We will not allow them to come here even as pilgrims." But the wiser section began to think in silence.

Then they sent Hulaish bin Alqamah Kināni, the chief of *Ahābish* tribes (tribes around Makkah) as their envoy. But he returned only after witnessing the sacrificial camels without even approaching the Prophet ﷺ and said to the Quraish, "The Muslims have come here not for fighting but to perform *Umrah*, and none has the right to prevent them from doing this." Hearing this the Quraish remarked, "You wild man, you know nothing, we shall never allow the Muslims to enter Makkah, otherwise we will be disgraced." Hulaish fell in anger and said, "If you keep the Muslims away from performing *Umrah*, we will fight against you with all our men." In response to these activities, the Prophet ﷺ sent Khirāsh bin Umayyah Khuzā'i with the message that they had come not for fighting but to perform *Umrah* and to sacrifice their animals. The Quraish slaughtered the camel of Khirāsh and attempted to kill him as well. But Hulaish and his men saved him and returned him safely. Following this a group of headstrong youngsters came out of Makkah with a plan to launch a sudden attack on the Muslims. They were all caught but were released later on by the order of the Prophet ﷺ.

He ﷺ then wanted to send Umar Fāruq ؓ to the Makkans. Thereupon Umar ؓ submitted, "I have no objection in going there but none of my tribe Banu Adi bin Ka'b is in Makkah to take me under their protection. My visit may land me in trouble, Uthmān bin Affān is a better person to do the job, for a large number of powerful and influential people of his tribe Banu Umayyah are still in Makkah." This suggestion was appreciated by the Prophet ﷺ and he sent Uthmān bin Affān ؓ to Abu Sufyān as his envoy. He came

across Abân bin Saeed bin Al-Âs as he entered Makkah, Abân took him under his protection without loss of time and took him to Abu Sufyân and the other chieftains of the Quraish. Having heard from Uthmân the message of Prophet ﷺ they said, "We give you permission to go around Ka'bah." Thereupon Uthmân said, "I can't circumambulate alone without the Prophet ﷺ." Hearing this the Quraish grew angry and held him back in Makkah.

### The Pledge of Ridwân:

When the return of Uthmân was delayed, a rumor spread among the Muslims that he was martyred. Hearing this the Prophet ﷺ said with determination, "We shall not leave this place without avenging the murder of Uthmân." Thus he sat down under a tree and took oath from all his Companions on sacrificing their lives for this cause. The Noble Qur'ân says referring to this event:

"When the believers took the oath at your hand (O Messenger) Allâh the Almighty grew happy with them." (48:18)

But Uthmân came back from Makkah after a short while. Although the sober and saner section of the Quraish disliked fighting, the majority opinion persisted in favor of fighting and killing. But finding the Muslims ready to do battle, their belligerent attitude also softened. Thus the Makkans sent Urwah bin Mas'ud, the chief of Banu Tha'qif to the Prophet ﷺ. He came and said, "O Muhammad! All the clans of the Quraish are determined to give you battle. The people who are now lending you their support, will scurry off leaving you alone for they are unable to stand the onslaught of the Quraish."

Abu Bakr answered him back so violently that he kept silent. The Prophet ﷺ said to Urwah, "We have not come here with the intention of fighting but with a desire to perform *Umrah*. But, if the Makkans are bent upon fighting, I shall fight with them to fulfill the duties of my Prophethood till my head is separated from body or Allâh the Almighty Himself decides the matter. If the Makkans so desire, I am ready to finalize a truce with them provided they let us do our preaching work, or accept Islam to do away with the fighting for ever."

## Deep Love of the Companions for the Messenger ﷺ:

During his conversation with the Prophet ﷺ, Urwah was again and again stretching his hand up to the beard of the Prophet ﷺ. Mughirah bin Shu'bah ؓ became displeased at this gesture and by hitting his hand with the handle of his sword, asked him to behave. When he went back to the Quraish he said, "O people of Quraish! I have been to the magnificent royal courts of Rome and Persia, but nowhere did I witness any ruler so dear to his people as Muhammad is to his followers. His Companions have such a deep love and high regard for him that when he performs ablution, they struggle to get the water he has used and don't even let it fall on the ground. If he speaks, everybody listens to him with rapt attention, nobody even dares to look straight into his eyes. They can't leave Muhammad at any cost. Accept what Muhammad has explained to you, and strike a peace deal with him." Following this the Quraish sent Suhail bin Amr with the power of attorney to make a compromise only on the condition that Muhammad ﷺ gives his consent to return back this year with his men only to come next year to perform *Umrah*. As soon as the Prophet ﷺ saw Suhail coming, he said, "The matter has now become easy since they have sent this man, it seems they want peace." Suhail put the terms of the treaty and the Prophet ﷺ accepted them as a whole. He ﷺ then summoned Ali ؓ and asked him to prepare a draft of the agreement. Ali ؓ wrote *Bismillāhir-Rahmānir-Rahim* (In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful) at the head of the document. Objecting to it Suhail said, "We do not recognize *Rahmān* (the Most Gracious), but write *Bismika Allāhumma* (In Your Name, O Allāh), as the custom goes." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Well, let it be." When Ali ؓ wrote the name of the Prophet, 'Muhammad, the Messenger of Allāh', Suhail again protested and said, "Had we witnessed that you were the Messenger of Allāh, we would not have turned you away from the House of Allāh nor fought with you. You should write 'Muhammad bin Abdullah'." "I am Allāh's Messenger even if you disbelieve in me," replied the Prophet ﷺ and asked Ali ؓ to rub out what he had written. "By Allāh, I cannot do it," replied Ali ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ asked Ali ؓ to point out the place to be rubbed out. Ali ؓ pointed it out to the Prophet ﷺ who expunged it.

## Conditions:

The following were the conditions of the Treaty:

1. The Muslims will perform *Umrâh* next year instead of this year. While entering Makkah they will carry no arms except their swords, and that too being sheathed. Moreover, they will not stay in Makkah for more than three days.
2. The Treaty will remain valid for a period of ten years. And nobody from any side would lift their hand against the other for the duration.
3. Every tribe or clan of Arabia will enjoy the right to enter into agreement with any party of its choice; but the allies will have to observe the terms and conditions of the Treaty in letter and spirit.
4. If anyone from the Quraish comes over to the Prophet ﷺ without obtaining the permission of his guardian, he will be returned to his guardian, but if anyone of those with the Prophet ﷺ escaped to the Quraish, they are not bound to be returned to him.

## Reaction to the Peace Treaty:

The fourth condition of the Treaty was terribly displeasing to the Companions. The Treaty was still being written when Abu Jandal ؓ, the son of Suhail himself, who was put in chains and mercilessly tortured for professing Islam, came to the Prophet ﷺ from his captivity. He showed fresh injuries on his person and expressed his profound desire to be taken to Al-Madinah. Suhail cried in excitement, "Abu Jandal should be handed over to me as per the Treaty." The Prophet ﷺ tried to drive the point home to Suhail but he would not agree. At last, Suhail took Abu Jandal ؓ back to Makkah beating him severely.

Umar ؓ witnessed the pitiable sight and lost control over himself. He then appeared before the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allâh! Are you not a true Prophet?" "Certainly! I am a true Prophet," the Prophet ﷺ replied. "Are we not believers?" "Certainly! You are believers," the Prophet ﷺ said in reply. "Are they not polytheists?"

Umar ﷺ submitted again. "Certainly! They are polytheists," the Prophet ﷺ said. "Why are we then accepting such ignominious terms?" Umar ﷺ inquired. The Prophet ﷺ said, "I am the Messenger of Allāh and therefore, cannot oppose the Command of Allāh, nor can I commit any breach of trust. He (Allāh) will never put me to disgrace." Hearing this Umar's anger subsided and he repented very deeply for his being so bold with the Prophet ﷺ and kept on seeking forgiveness of Allāh and setting slaves free to atone for his behavior.

### Unique Victory:

Having concluded the Treaty, the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims sacrificed the animals at Hudaibiyah, put off their *Ihrām* and shaved their heads. After this Treaty, the Khuzā'ah tribe formed an alliance with the Prophet ﷺ and the Banu Bakr tribe formed an alliance with the Quraish of Makkah. The Khuzā'ah and Banu Bakr were at odds with one another for quite a long time. Since each of them, formed an alliance with one party or another, they had to be at peace with each other according to one of the conditions of the Treaty. When the Prophet ﷺ was returning from Hudaibiyah to Al-Madinah, *Sūrat Al-Fath* (The Victory) was revealed on the way. Now what the Companions took as a setback was, in fact, a unique victory. Very soon the Companions saw with their naked eyes that the seemingly weak terms from the Muslim point of view proved very strong and useful. The greatest victory for the Muslims was the condition of peace which the Muslims secured through this Treaty, which paved the way for the spread of Islam so quickly that could not have been possible in a state of fighting and disorder. Islam means peace and it has so often gone to war to establish peace. Battles in Islam have always been fought for winning peace. Thus in only two years after the Truce of Hudaibiyah, enjoying a state of peace, the number of believers doubled.

### Consequences of the Truce of Hudaibiyah

The fourth condition of the Treaty was as an irritant of the highest degree. This condition was repulsive to the Muslims, however, the Quraish eventually requested the Prophet ﷺ to cancel this condition

which seemingly was in their favor. The following events will explain what caused this surprising change. A few days after the return of the Muslims to Al-Madinah, Abu Basir, who had already confessed Islam in Makkah, broke away and took shelter in Al-Madinah. The Quraish sent two of their men to bring Abu Basir back to Makkah according to the recently signed Treaty. The Prophet sent him back. At Dhul-Hulaifah, he, according to a plan, said to one of his guards, "Your sword appears to be of the highest quality." Hearing this, another guard unsheathed the sword of his fellow and began to admire it. Abu Basir said, "Let me see the sword." He gave it to Abu Basir without the least care.

Abu Basir struck him with the sword so hard that his head came off and fell down. The other guard took to his heels towards Al-Madinah and entered into the Prophet's Mosque frightened, and narrated the incident to the Prophet. He was still reporting the event when Abu Basir came in following him with the unsheathed sword. When he was sure he wouldn't get any protection in Al-Madinah, Abu Basir said to the Prophet: "You have already fulfilled your duty by handing me over to the polytheists, but Allāh the Almighty caused me to restore my liberty. I will now go away because you will, in fulfillment of your agreement, give me to the polytheists again." Saying this he left the place. The man from the Quraish returned to Makkah and related the incident to them.

Abu Basir fled to the seacoast and settled at Eis. When Abu Jandal bin Suhail came to know of this, he also escaped from Makkah and joined Abu Basir. Now, whoever embraced Islam in Makkah fled from there to join the band of Abu Basir. The band grew so strong that it began to intercept the trade caravans of Makkah. Things got so bad that the Quraish wrote to the Prophet to abrogate the fourth condition of the Treaty, and they would no longer demand the return of those who escaped and went to him in future.

The Prophet accepted the request of the Quraish and sent a message to Abu Basir to come to Al-Madinah along with his band of men. This order reached Abu Basir at a time when he was seriously ill and confined to bed. However, he called Abu Jandal and instructed him to carry out the command without loss of time.

Abu Basir ﷺ then passed away and Abu Jandal ﷺ left for Al-Madinah accompanied by his fellows. This is how the despised fourth condition of the Treaty was mutually canceled.

## **Return of the Muslims from Abyssinia**

On return from Hudaibiyah, the Prophet ﷺ sent Amr bin Umayyah Damri ﷺ with a letter addressed to Negus, the King of Abyssinia, to bring Ja'far bin Abu Talib ﷺ and all other Muslim migrants back to Al-Madinah. Through this dispatch, the Prophet ﷺ had also invited Negus to accept Islam, which he did at once. He bade farewell to the Muslims with many valuable gifts. From Hudaibiyah, the Prophet ﷺ reached Al-Madinah in Dhul-Hijjah and stayed in Al-Madinah till Muharram, 7 AH. Towards the end of 6 AH, the Prophet ﷺ introduced among the Muslims the practice of racing camels and horses. It is said that Aishah's mother died the same year and Abu Hurairah ﷺ embraced Islam.

## **The Seventh Year of Migration**

### **Conquest of Khaibar**

After the Truce of Hudaibiyah, the Prophet ﷺ obtained peace with the Makkan polytheists. However, news came to Al-Madinah that there was a plan to launch an attack on Al-Madinah. Being uprooted from Al-Madinah, Banu Nadir and Banu Qainuqa' were staying in Khaibar and the flames of revenge were burning in their hearts, and very soon the Jews of the region were incited to rise up against the Muslims. Khaibar became the center of hostility against the Muslims. They started large-scale military preparations against the believers. They drew Banu Ghatfân to their side by promising them half of the produce of Al-Madinah.

The Jews had the support of the hypocrites of Al-Madinah and even though they were far away from Al-Madinah, they knew of every move the Muslims were making. Informed of their military preparations, the Prophet ﷺ marched towards Khaibar in Muharram, 7 AH, at the head of one thousand five hundred Companions leaving



Saba' bin Arfatah ﷺ in Al-Madinah as Administrator. He ﷺ chose Raji', a region lying between Khaibar and Banu Ghatfân, to serve as his military camp, with the result Banu Ghatfân who kept fearing a Muslim attack at any time, could not dare go to help the Jews of Khaibar.

In Khaibar, there were three settlements in which the Jews had a cluster of six big forts. They had among them fighters like Marhab and Yâsir who were wrestlers of repute. They stepped forward and made a challenge for a duel. Muhammad bin Maslamah and Zubair bin Awwâm ﷺ accepted the challenge. After a fierce fight, Maslamah ﷺ killed Marhab and Zubair bin Awwâm ﷺ slew Yâsir. As per some narratives, Ali ﷺ was the man who had killed Marhab.

Finding it almost impossible to face the Muslims in the open, the Jews stayed in their forts. The Muslim army launched an attack on the fort called Nâ'im which belonged to Marhab and captured it. The next fort to be captured was Sa'b bin Mu'âdh. Then attack was made on the second settlement of Khaibar. Its forts were also captured. Now came the Qamus, fort of Abu Huqaiq in the third settlement, it also fell. Safiyyah bint Hua'i was brought to Al-Madinah as a captive and the Prophet ﷺ married her after setting her free.

Watih and Salâlim were the two remaining forts that came under siege by the Muslim troops, which continued for ten days. They obtained peace and safety from the Muslims on giving half of the produce from their lands and gardens.

During the battle of Khaibar, fifteen Muslims were honored with martyrdom, four from the *Muhâjirin* and eleven from the *Ansâr*, while 39 Jews were killed. Zainab bint Al-Harth, the wife of a Jewish chieftain, Salâm bin Mishkam served the Prophet ﷺ a poisonous roasted goat. As he took a piece of it, he spat saying that the bones were giving information about the poison. Bishr bin Al-Bara' ﷺ who was sharing the meal, had taken a piece of meat and swallowed it which led to his immediate death. Zainab was called and she confessed her crime. She was handed over to the relatives of Bishr ﷺ but they held back from killing her as she had already accepted Islam. According to another narrative, she did not embrace Islam and was killed in retaliation. Preparations to set out for Al-Madinah were still

on when some migrants of Abyssinia appeared before the Prophet ﷺ along with the valuable gifts and a letter from Negus, the King of Abyssinia. Their caravan included Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib, his wife, Asma' bint Umais, his sons Abdullah, Aun, and Muhammad, Khâlid bin Saeed bin Al-Âs bin Umayyah, his wife, Aminah bint Khalaf, and his son, Saeed ﷺ. While Umm Khâlid, Amr bin Saeed, Abu Musa Ash'ari, Jahm bin Qais, Harth bin Khâlid, Muhinah bin Ghidâr, Ma'mar bin Abdullah, Abu Hâtib bin Amr, Malik bin Rabi'ah bin Qais and Amr bin Umayyah Damri ﷺ were those who had gone to bring them back. Some of them went to Al-Madinah and the rest arrived in Khaibar.

On the way back in the eastern side from Khaibar, there lay the flourishing town of Fidak. The Jews of Fidak sent a message to the Prophet ﷺ to take away everything in lieu of their lives. The request was accepted. Since Fidak came under possession without a fight, the property was given to state control as the sole property of Allâh and His Messenger. When the Muslim army passed by Wâdi-ul-Qura, the Jews of the area began to shoot arrows at the Muslims. They were also besieged and they earned peace and safety at the cost of half of their produce. The people of Taima also obtained peace like those of Wâdi-ul-Qura.

### **After the Conquest of Khaibar**

On way back from Khaibar, one morning the Prophet ﷺ and the entire Muslim army slept past sunrise. It was the Prophet ﷺ who got up first and roused the others from their sleep. At a little distance from there, he ﷺ and his Companions offered the *Fajr* prayer. Thus he ﷺ showed the Companions the offering of the prayer when rising late from the sleep.

The Jews were very wealthy and the lands of Khaibar under their possession were also very fertile. After the conquest of Khaibar, the booty and agricultural lands distributed among the Muslims removed their poverty and hardship. Now the *Muhâjirin* became owners of property and became free from the need for help and support of the *Ansâr*. From the lands of Khaibar, the Prophet ﷺ received the property of Fidak, which served the purpose of caring for the many

visiting delegations and his other guests, while the land from Banu Nadir sustained his relatives, the orphans and the poor.

A very wealthy man from Makkah, Hajjāj bin Ilāt Sulami, left Makkah telling everyone that he was going on a journey but he actually went to the Prophet ﷺ and he became a Muslim in his presence and joined the Prophet ﷺ during the expedition of Khaibar. He said, "The Makkans are still unaware of my conversion to Islam. With your permission, may I go to Makkah and bring my wealth, which is in the possession of my wife and collect the money I have given as loans to the Makkans?" The Prophet ﷺ granted him permission. When Hajjāj went to Makkah, he found that the Makkans desperately wanted to know about the outcome of the Muslims' action in Khaibar. Hajjāj used this event to deceive the disbelievers. He told them nothing about the consequences of the battle of Khaibar and utilized their support in collecting his loans; they considered it a support for a fellow enemy of the Muslims. He then set out from Makkah with his entire wealth after collecting the whole amount that was outstanding; he only informed Abbās bin Abdul-Muttalib about his accepting Islam and the conquest of Khaibar by the Muslims. The Makkans were angry and depressed at the success of the Muslim military action in Khaibar and Hajjāj's escape from Makkah with such a vast amount of wealth.

On his return from Khaibar, the Prophet ﷺ sent detachments to all those tribes who were still making efforts to inflict harm on the Muslims. The purpose behind sending those detachments was to send terror into their hearts so that any conspiracy would be prevented before it was put into action. Abu Bakr along with Salamah bin Akwa' and others were sent to the Fazārah tribe, while Umar was dispatched to the Hawāzin at the head of thirty horsemen. Abdullah bin Rawānah was sent to arrest Bishr bin Zarām, the Jew who used to incite the Jews of Khaibar against the Muslims. Bashir bin Sa'd Ansāri set out at the head of thirty horsemen to punish Banu Murrah, while Usāmah bin Zaid went to the clan Huraqah (Banu Humais) of Juhainah tribe. Ghālib bin Abdullah Laithi was sent to Banu Al-Mulawwih, and Abu Hadrād Aslami was sent to Rifā'ah bin Qais, the chief of the Jusham bin Mu'āwiyah clan. Abu Qatādah and Muhallim bin Jaththāmah were sent to Idam.

All these military detachments came back with success. Usâmah bin Zaid ﷺ lifted his sword to kill a person who immediately pronounced *La ilâha illallâh* (there is no God to be worshipped except Allâh), despite this, Usâmah ﷺ put him to death. When the matter was later reported to the Prophet ﷺ, he asked Usâmah ﷺ to explain his action. He submitted that he had killed him because he had pronounced the *Shahâdah* just to save his life. "Did you split his heart to see if he had pronounced the *Shahâdah* out of hypocrisy?" The Prophet ﷺ angrily expressed himself. Usâmah ﷺ expressed his utmost regret over his behavior and promised not to repeat it again.

In the same way, Abu Qatâdah and Muhallim bin Jaththâmah ﷺ were once going somewhere when they came across Âmir bin Adbat, a man from Ashja' clan who was making a journey with his goods. When Âmir bin Adbat noticed the Muslim detachment, he said "*As-Salamu Alaikum*" in the Islamic manner. But the Muslims doubted his sincerity and Muhallim bin Jaththâmah ﷺ put him to death. When the expedition returned, the incident was reported to the Prophet ﷺ, he expressed his displeasure and said to Muhallim ﷺ, "Why did you kill him in a state of his being a believer in Allâh?" Then he ﷺ gave the relatives of Âmir, fifty camels as compensation and they agreed to free Muhallim ﷺ from retaliation.

## **Invitation Letters to Islam**

In this same year, the Prophet ﷺ sent letters to the kings of the Arabs and non-Arabs. His letter to Negus, the King of Abyssinia has already been mentioned. Negus accepted Islam gracefully. Then the Prophet ﷺ sent Dihyah bin Khalîfah Al-Kalbi ﷺ to Heraclius, the king of Rome; Hâtib bin Abu Balta'ah ﷺ to Muqauqis, the king of Egypt and Alexandria; Ala bin Al-Hadrami ﷺ to Mundhir bin Sâwa, the king of Bahrain.

Amr bin Al-Âs ﷺ was sent to the king of Oman; Salit bin Âmiri ﷺ was sent to Haudhah bin Ali, the king of Yamâmah; Shuja' bin Wahb ﷺ to Hârith bin Shimr Ghassâni, the king of Damascus, and also to Jabalah bin Aiham. Muhâjir bin Abu Umayyah Makhzumi ﷺ was sent to Hârith bin Abd Kulâl Himyari, the king of Yemen; and Abdullah bin Hudhaifah Sahmi ﷺ to Chosroes, the king of Persia.

Heraclius, the king of Rome did not embrace Islam fearing the opposition of the Christians and the loss of the throne, but he paid respect to the letter of the Prophet ﷺ and his messenger. The King of Egypt held the letter and the envoy of the Prophet ﷺ in high esteem. In reply he wrote a very courteous letter to the Prophet ﷺ and sent garments, a donkey and two slave-girls to him. Mundhir bin Sāwa also showed respect to his letter and the envoy. The king of Oman embraced Islam when he received his letter. However, Chosroes, the King of Persia, tore the letter into pieces and behaved rudely with Abdullah bin Hudhaifah ؓ. Informed of this, the Prophet ﷺ remarked, "Even so shall Allāh shatter his kingdom to pieces." And it happened exactly as he said.

### **Arrival In Makkah**

The Prophet ﷺ in the early part of Dhul-Qa'dah, 7 AH, asked only those Companions who had taken part in the Treaty of Hudaibiyah to make preparations for the journey to Makkah. Two thousand Companions in all, left for Makkah. Abu Dhar Ghifāri ؓ was appointed the Administrator of Al-Madinah. According to the Treaty, they took off all their weapons except their swords and entered Makkah.

Reaching the Ka'bah, the Prophet ﷺ asked the pilgrims to lay bare their right shoulder and wrap a part of the *Ihrām* passing it from below the armpit, and then go around the House of Allāh in a running manner. He did this so that their readiness, determination, strength and diligence would come in to full view of the onlooking Makkan polytheists. A large number of polytheists had shifted to mountain passes and plains to avoid the sight of the believers performing *Umrah*, which would be distressful for them.

After accomplishing the rites of *Umrah*, the Prophet ﷺ married Maimunah ؓ, the sister of Umm Fadl and the wife of Abbās bin Abdul-Muttalib. The fourth day, Suhail bin Amr and Huwaitib bin Abdul-Uzza came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked him to vacate Makkah as per the Treaty. He said, "Don't worry, I am ready to leave Makkah. But you are quite aware that I have just married a woman here and the bride has not yet been sent to me. If you allow me, I will have a

marriage party and invite all the Makkans to a feast before leaving the city. I think you will lose nothing if it is done." Suhail said, "We need no feast or your party, and you should go from here observing the terms of the Treaty." So, the Prophet ﷺ proclaimed their departure then and there. The Prophet ﷺ, along with his Companions, came out of the *Haram* (sacred) area and halted at Sarif valley. Maimunah bint Hârith ﷺ joined the Prophet ﷺ there.

On the eve of leaving Makkah, Umârah, the daughter of Hamzah ﷺ, who was still a young child, came running and crying to go to Al-Madinah. Ali ﷺ lifted the child and put her on his saddle. Now Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib and Zaid bin Hârithah also rose to make a claim saying, "Since she is my cousin and my wife is her mother's sister, she must be given under my care." The Prophet ﷺ patiently heard all the claims and then entrusted the child to Ja'far saying, "The mother's sister is like the mother, so she should be brought up under the loving care of Ja'far's household." Ali and Zaid ﷺ abided by this decision.

### **Amr bin Al-Âs accepts Islam**

A few days after the arrival of the Prophet ﷺ to Al-Madinah, Amr bin Al-Âs embraced Islam and decided to migrate from Makkah. It has already been discussed how he was sent to the Court of Negus, the king of Abyssinia to bring back the Muslims who had migrated to that country and how his efforts failed leaving him ashamed and disgraced. In spite of all that, the truth of Islam deeply impressed his mind and his old beliefs were getting eroded bit by bit. And a time came when he could not hold himself back. Khâlid bin Walid was his close friend. On the occasion of Hudaibiyah, he (Khâlid) had an opportunity to hear the Prophet ﷺ reciting the Qur'ân in *Isha* prayer at Ufân and he found his heart melting and growing in love for Islam. Amr bin Al-Âs opened his heart to Khâlid bin Walid, and the latter one rose without any reluctance to accompany him. The two friends acquainted Uthmân bin Talhah, their third friend with their intention. He also lost no time in joining the two. These three chieftains of Makkah set out for Al-Madinah, they appeared before the Prophet ﷺ and embraced Islam immediately. Their conversion to Islam gave a tremendous boost to the Muslims. When Khâlid bin Walid

and Amr bin Al-Âs came to know that embracing Islam brings forgiveness for all past sins, their joy knew no bounds.

### **The Eighth Year of Migration**

Arabia was now apparently out of any grave danger. The act of accepting Islam posed no danger to life and property. Negative internal forces of all types had exhausted their spirit of opposition and their strength fighting Islam. Islam had itself become the greatest power within the bounds of Arabia. However, the Quraish of Makkah, who once wielded matchless honor and distinction, were still active in their opposition to Islam and in practicing unbelief and polytheism.

The hypocrites of Al-Madinah, the Jews of Khaibar and the polytheists of Makkah were the three forces who had left no stone unturned to set Arabia against the Muslims, but their efforts ended in failure. Now they turned towards Persia and Rome and started inciting them against the believers. However, the Prophet was not unaware of their conspiratorial aims. The communications sent by the Prophet to the various monarchs had left a salutary effect on most of them. But, a few whose minds were permeated with poisonous propaganda showed rudeness to the call of the Prophet and set themselves against Islam. It was a very delicate situation for the Muslims, because in case of a foreign invasion, the Arab forces antagonistic to Islam might rise against the believers.

### **The Expedition to Mu'tah**

Among the letters written by the Prophet to the different monarchs, one was addressed to the ruler of Busra and was sent through Hârith bin Umair Azdi . On the way to Busra, Hârith had just reached Mu'tah lying on the border of Syria, when Shurahbîl bin Amr Ghassâni, a deputy of the Byzantine Emperor held him. When he came to know that the captive was the envoy of the Prophet and was carrying a letter from him, he lost his temper and killed him. This tragic news sent the Muslims into a state of outrage. The Prophet lost no time in sending an expedition of three thousand soldiers under



the command of Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ. He instructed them that if Zaid ﷺ were killed then Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib ﷺ should take the command. If Ja'far ﷺ were also slain then the command would pass on to Abdullah bin Rawâhah ﷺ, and in case of his falling the Muslims were at liberty to choose anyone as their commander. The Prophet ﷺ escorted the army for a distance and then returned to Al-Madinah.

Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ led his force to Ma'ân where he found out that Shurahbil bin Amr, the ruler of Mu'tah was present at Balqâ' with a hundred thousand Roman troops. This news sent a wave of anxiety into the hearts of the Muslim troops, which were halted at Ma'ân holding consultations about dealing with the new developments. The deliberation were going on when Abdullah bin Rawâhah ﷺ gave a call at the top of his voice:

"Men, you have come out in quest of martyrdom. We do not fight the enemy on the strength of our numbers, or our power; we fight them with the religion we have been honored with by Allâh. Thus advance towards Mu'tah and the army of Heraclius. Keep your right and left wings in order. Come on, we shall be winners both ways; either we win or we gain martyrdom."

In response to Abdullah bin Rawâhah's inspiring speech, Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ got up with lance in one hand and the standard in the other. And with him rose the entire Muslim army filled with a new spirit and enthusiasm. The Muslim troops moved ahead from Ma'ân and chose a vast field in Mu'tah to give battle. Both the armies stood face to face, three thousand Muslims against one hundred thousand enemy soldiers armed to the teeth. The Muslim army had with them Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ for the first time and he had his first opportunity to test his sword on behalf of Islam. Moreover, it was the first battle between the Muslims and the Christians, Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ was moving ahead of all with the standard of Islam firmly in his hand. The right wing was led by Qutbah bin Qatâdah Udhri ﷺ, while the left wing was under the charge of Abâyah bin Mâlik Ansâri ﷺ.

Zaid bin Hârithah ﷺ descended on the army and died fighting bravely with innumerable wounds on his body. The standard was



now taken in hand by Ja'far ؓ who led the fight. When the battle became confined, he jumped off his charger and hamstringed its forelegs and fought until he lost his right hand. He took the standard in his left hand but when it was also cut off, he kept the standard flying with the support of his neck. At last, he fell dead on the battlefield. The standard was then held aloft by Abdullah bin Rawâhah ؓ. He too dismounted from his horse and pressed onwards. He also was granted martyrdom after killing a number of enemy soldiers. After his exit from the battle scene the Muslims were subdued by a sense of anxiety. But Thâbit bin Aqram ؓ sprang forward and gave a call by lifting the standard: "O Muslims! Unite to choose a man to lead you." The Muslim troops raised their voice: "We agree on your leadership." Thereupon Thâbit bin Aqram ؓ said, "I am not fit for the job; choose Khâlid bin Walid as your leader." "We agree on Khâlid bin Walid," the people confirmed in one voice.

Hearing this Khâlid bin Walid ؓ swung into action and took the standard from the hand of Thâbit bin Aqram ؓ. Now the Muslim troops rallied round him with new zeal. Khâlid ؓ infused in their hearts a new spirit of do or die. And along with this he launched such successive attacks on all sides that the enemy soldiers were left unnerved. Not only did Khâlid bin Walid ؓ fight gallantly, he also led his army to show its mettle in the battlefield. He displayed his genius as a military commander and kept the entire military in full control with extraordinary skill. He moved ahead and drew back the right and the left wings according to the demand of the battle. Despite superiority of numbers, the enemy troops did not prove a match for the Muslim army of far less numbers and weaponry. Khâlid bin Walid ؓ looked like a flash of lightning throughout the battlefield. The whole day he led his three thousand men against the large army of one hundred thousand. By the evening the Romans escaped leaving behind booty and corpses.

### **Khâlid ؓ — Salfullah**

His instinct for leadership and military skill was acclaimed by everyone and he has received the title of the "Sword of Allâh" from Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ. The same day that the fighters in the cause of Islam

were engaged in giving battle, hundreds of miles away, the Prophet ﷺ ascended the pulpit to tell the Muslims: "The Muslim troops took on the enemy. Zaid gained martyrdom and Allāh forgave him then Ja'far took the standard in his hand and was surrounded by the enemies, with the result that he was honored with martyrdom, and Allāh forgave him too. Following this, Abdullah bin Rawāhah ؓ took the standard of Islam in his hand and fell down martyred. They were all lifted to Paradise. After these three, Khālid bin Walid, the sword among the swords of Allāh took the standard in his hand and set the matter right."

From that day on, Khālid bin Walid ؓ came to be called *Saifullāh* (the Sword of Allāh). As the sad news broke out, the household of Ja'far ؓ was subdued with grief. The Prophet ﷺ sent a meal to Ja'far's house. When Khālid bin Walid ؓ reached near Al-Madinah along with his troops, the Prophet ﷺ came out of Al-Madinah to greet them and gave Khālid ؓ the glad tidings of the title of 'the Sword of Allāh'. One of the Companions saw in a dream Ja'far ؓ flying in Paradise with two wings. From that day he was called Ja'far Tayyār —'Ja'far, the flier'. As per one narrative, the Prophet ﷺ once said, "Allāh the Almighty has conferred two wings on Ja'far with which he keeps flying in heaven." The battle of Mu'tah was fought in Jumāda Al-Ulā, 8 AH.

### The Expedition to Qudā'ah (*Dhāt-us-Salāsīl*)

About a month after the battle of Mu'tah came the news that the people of Qudā'ah had collected an army near the Syrian border to invade Al-Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ at once dispatched a detachment consisting of three hundred *Muhājirin* and *Ansār* under the command of Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ. On reaching near the enemy, it came to be known that the number of the enemy soldiers was far more than was expected. A courier was immediately sent to Al-Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ sent Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrāh ؓ at the head of reinforcements. The enemy army could not stand the joint onslaught and scattered in fear and confusion. The raiding party returned safe and sound. Shortly after this came the news that the Juhainah tribe, along the seacoast, at a distance of five stages from Al-Madinah had

collected men and arms to raid Al-Madinah. The Prophet ﷺ immediately sent Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrâh at the head of three hundred *Muhâjirin* and *Ansâr*, but the expedition came back without engaging the enemy because they were so terrified at the sight of the Muslim detachment that they fled.

## **Conquest of Makkah**

A surprising incident occurred in Sha'ban, 8 AH. Banu Khuzâ'ah and Banu Bakr had halted their long standing feud and made peace after entering into alliances respectively with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and the Quraish as part of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah. According to the Treaty they could not attack one another for a period of ten years. But Banu Bakr developed an evil scheme against Banu Khuzâ'ah and they planned to take revenge on their rivals. The Quraish of Makkah should have held Banu Bakr back from implementing their plan against Banu Khuzâ'ah making them uphold the Treaty. Instead of preventing them, the Quraish, totally at variance with their obligation to the Treaty, came out in the open lending full and active support to Banu Bakr with men and material. They broke their covenant to the extent that Safwân bin Umayyah, Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl, and Suhail bin Amr joined the fighting along with Banu Bakr.

The combined attack of Banu Bakr and the Quraish inflicted on Banu Khuzâ'ah a heavy loss of 20 or 30 men. Being caught by a surprise attack at night while they were asleep, they found no where to take refuge except at the House of Allâh, the Ka'bah, and even some of them were killed there (this was also a breach of trust as the Ka'bah was a sanctuary for all). That fateful night when the massacre of Banu Khuzâ'ah took place and the terms of the Peace Treaty were thrown to the wind, a few persons of Banu Khuzâ'ah in Makkah cried for help from the Prophet ﷺ. At that same moment the Messenger of Allâh was in the house of Maimunah in Al-Madinah and was performing *Wudu* (ablution). He heard what they said in Makkah and replied: "*Labbaik! Labbaik!* (I am at your service)." Maimunah said, "Whom were you talking to when you said *Labbaik?*" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "At this moment the complaint of Banu Khuzâ'ah was being brought to me and I responded to it." Amazingly, they also heard in Makkah

at the same time the consoling voice of the Prophet ﷺ. The next morning the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said to Aishah ؓ, "Last night, Banu Bakr and the Quraish have jointly massacred some of the Banu Khuzâ'ah." Aishah ؓ said, "By this did the Quraish violate the Treaty in your opinion?" The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ confidently said, "They have certainly breached the trust, and very soon, Allāh the Almighty will issue His Command concerning it."

A Few days after the incident Budail bin Warqâ' and Amr bin Sâlim came to Al-Madinah and put their complaint before the Prophet ﷺ. Amr bin Sâlim told his tale of woe in a poem filled with gloom and grief at their being brutally attacked and killed. Some of the verses are as follows:

"The Quraish have committed a breach of trust against you, and they have broken the firm treaty signed with you.

They have plundered us like hay, and they believe that we have nobody to help us.

They are mean and deficient in number, and they attacked us at Watir when we were lying asleep."

The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ consoled them saying, "You will be helped." At the time of their departure from Al-Madinah the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ remarked: "Abu Sufyân has set out from Makkah to seek an extension in the duration of Peace Treaty and get it consolidated, but his mission will end in failure."

When the Makkans found time to think over the consequences of their misconduct, they were struck by fear. They sent Abu Sufyân to renew the Peace Treaty. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ ordered the Muslims, on the other hand, to make preparations for the ensuing battle and to keep it a top secret. On the way back to Makkah, Budail bin Warqâ' and his group came across Abu Sufyân who was heading for Al-Madinah. "Where have you been?" asked Abu Sufyân. "I was only up in this valley," Budail replied. Abu Sufyân was under the impression that the Prophet ﷺ was unaware of the attack against Banu Khuzâ'ah that had just occurred. He was determined to get the Peace Treaty renewed as soon as possible.

## Abu Sufyân in Al-Madinah:

Abu Sufyân came to Al-Madinah and made several attempts to contact the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ, Abu Bakr Siddiq, Umar and Ali ؑ, but none of them paid attention to him. During this exercise in futility Ali ؑ, in order to make him look foolish, said to him, "You are the chief of Banu Kinânah, so you can go to the Prophet's Mosque and announce that you extend the terms of the Treaty and confirm it." He did accordingly and left in hurry. When he went back to Makkah and related what had happened, they laughed at him saying, "Ali has made a fool of you." Only then did Abu Sufyân become conscious of his stupidity. Immediately after the departure of Abu Sufyân, the Prophet ﷺ asked the Companions to march on Makkah. In spite of the massive size of the military preparations, the Companions did not know the target of attack. It was simply because the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ wanted the Makkans to be caught unaware.

However, a Companion of the Prophet ﷺ, Hâtib bin Abu Balta'ah ؓ informed the Quraish of the impending Muslim attack, in a letter sent through a woman. Allâh the Almighty informed this to His Messenger ﷺ through inspiration. He sent Ali and Zubair bin Awwâm ؓ immediately after the woman with the description of her features. They caught her after a hard chase, he searched her belongings but the letter remained hidden. However, Ali ؑ was quite sure about the letter because he knew the Prophet ﷺ did not say anything that wasn't absolutely true. When Ali ؑ threatened her with dire consequences, she drew out the letter from her hair and handed it over to them. The letter was from Hâtib bin Abu Balta'ah ؓ to the Quraish. The letter along with the woman was brought to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Hâtib ؓ was sent for and was asked for an explanation. He said, "Since my relatives were still in Makkah and in danger, I liked to oblige the Makkans by informing them about the ensuing Muslim attack so that my relatives would remain safe from them." Having heard this, Umar ؓ lost his temper and said, "O Messenger of Allâh! Allow me to cut his head off." The Prophet ﷺ observed, "O Umar, Hâtib has committed a mistake which is pardonable." And so Hâtib ؓ was forgiven.

## March to Makkah:

On Ramadân 11, 8 AH, the Prophet ﷺ set out from Al-Madinah at the head of a ten-thousand-man army of the Companions. The failure of Abu Sufyân's mission had disheartened the Quraish and they were in the dark about the plans of the believers. The Prophet's march to Makkah was very swift. They came across his uncle Abbâs bin Abdul-Muttalib ﷺ on the way who, along with his wife and children, was moving to Al-Madinah after they had embraced Islam. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ took Abbâs ﷺ to Makkah and sent his relatives to Al-Madinah. Marching quickly, the Muslim army reached Marr-az-Zahrân at a distance of 8 miles from Makkah. The Makkans were still unaware of the presence of Muslim troops even though they were so close to Makkah. They encamped at that place. The Makkans came to know of the Muslim force only from the shepherds who went back in the night. Informed of this, Abu Sufyân came out to look into the matter. The Prophet ﷺ had already deputed Umar ﷺ at the head of a patrol party to ward off a night attack.

Abbâs bin Abdul-Muttalib ﷺ was anxious about the safety of his people and wanted them to accept Islam and be safe. He came out mounted on Duldul, the mule of the Prophet ﷺ, in the night and moved towards Makkah. As per the order of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ the entire Muslim army had, in separate groups of one thousand each, lit their campfires.

When Abu Sufyân witnessed the blazing campfires spread over a vast area, he was shocked and stunned to the core to think how such a large army had been collected.

Abbâs ﷺ recognized the voice of Abu Sufyân even in the dark night and sounded back that the army belonged to the Prophet ﷺ and was ready to invade Makkah the next morning. Abu Sufyân was left more confounded at this disheartening news. He, in a state of utmost bewilderment, drew near Abbâs ﷺ to seek his counsel at this juncture. Abbâs ﷺ said to him, "Ride on the back of this mule and I will bring you to the Prophet ﷺ for he alone can give you protection." Abu Sufyân got on the mule without a moment's delay. Umar Fâruq

recognized Abu Sufyân and wanted to kill him at once. But Abbâs ﷺ spurred the mule and quickly went into the camp of the Prophet ﷺ. Umar ﷺ came chasing him and said, "O Prophet of Allâh! Command me to kill this disbeliever, for he has come under our control without any condition." Abbâs ﷺ said, "I have already given him protection." But Umar ﷺ sought permission once again. Abbâs ﷺ replied to him with a pinch of taunt, "Umar! You would not have insisted on his being killed had he belonged to your family." Thereupon Umar ﷺ said, "Abbas! I felt more happy on your accepting Islam than I would have been, had my father done so because I found the Prophet ﷺ eager for your becoming a Muslim." After this exchange between the two, the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ enjoined, "Well, Abu Sufyân is given respite for a night." Following this he asked Abbâs ﷺ to keep Abu Sufyân in his own camp. And next morning Abu Sufyân appeared before the Prophet ﷺ and confessed Islam.

### Abu Sufyân ﷺ honored

Abbâs ﷺ appeared before the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ and submitted, "Abu Sufyân is a person who loves honor, so would you please give him some special honor." At this he said, "He who enters the Sacred Mosque will be safe, he who enters the house of Abu Sufyân will be safe, he who shuts his doors upon himself will be safe and he who goes unarmed will be safe." Abu Sufyân ﷺ felt elated.

The army on the move surged like an ocean. Different tribes had passed by with their tribal colors. Abu Sufyân ﷺ ascended a raised spot to witness the spectacle of the Muslim troops on the march and hurried back to Makkah ahead of all to announce: "He who enters the Sacred Mosque or my house will be safe." The Prophet of Allâh ﷺ wanted to avoid bloodshed at all costs. His exit from Makkah in a state of helplessness and then his victorious and glorious return must have been on his mind. This day he made a triumphant entry into Makkah with his head lowered giving thanks to Allâh the Almighty. He then circumambulated the Ka'bah seven times mounted on his animal and then cleared the Ka'bah of idols. He then took the keys of the Ka'bah from Uthmân bin Talhah, and entered the Ka'bah and prayed to Allâh the Exalted. Following this the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ



stood at the door of the Ka'bah, holding its frame, while the Quraish arranged themselves in front of him in the courtyard filled with fear and shame.

## Historic Address of the Prophet ﷺ:

The Prophet ﷺ said addressing them: "There is no God but Allāh Alone. He has made good His Promise and help to His slave. He has alone overthrown all the Confederates. Lo'! All the rites, privileges and claims to retaliation and blood compensation are beneath my feet except the custody of the Ka'bah and the giving water to the pilgrims. Even cutting down a green tree is not valid within the sanctuary. O you people of the Quraish, Allāh has abolished the haughtiness of paganism and the pride of lineage. Man comes from Adam and Adam came from dust. Allāh the Almighty says: 'O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and have made you nations and tribes that you may know one another. Verily! the noblest of you, with Allāh is the best in conduct.' (49:13) O Quraish, what do you think I am about to do with you?" "We hope for the best," they replied, "you are a noble brother, son of a noble brother." The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said in reply, "I say to you what Yusuf (Prophet Joseph) said to his brothers: 'Have no fear this day, go your way for you are all free'."

The address being over, the Prophet ﷺ went up to Mount Safa and sat down to take the oath of allegiance to Allāh and His Messenger from the people. After finishing with men, he deputed Umar ʿ to take *Bai'ah* from the women, and he kept seeking forgiveness of Allāh for them. Safwān bin Umayyah fled to Yemen for fear of life. Umair bin Wahb from his tribe sought safety for him and he was granted immunity. Safwān was the man who had resisted the entry of the Muslims into Makkah and fled from Makkah after the conquest; so did Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl, and he too was granted safety. Both of them had the pleasure of coming to the fold of Islam after the battle of Hunain.

## The Truth came and Falsehood vanquished:

Destruction of idols installed in the Ka'bah meant the destruction of the idols all over Arabia. Likewise, the entry of the Quraish into Islam



implied the whole Arabia coming to the fold of Islam, for all eyes were fixed on the Quraish of Makkah to see whether they accepted Islam or not.

A large number of the Quraish were converted to Islam after the conquest of Makkah. However, many of them still remained immovable and unyielding. But none of them were compelled to accept Islam. The sole aim before the Muslims was to do away with disruptions, bring perfect peace and confer on them complete religious freedom. With peace prevailing and freedom of religious practice granted, the idol worshipers got a full opportunity to study, observe and watch Islam in operation. It resulted in their quick conversion to Islam in large numbers.

After the conquest of Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ announced throughout the land that nobody becoming a Muslim was allowed to keep an idol in his house. Following this he sent a few parties to destroy idols installed in the area around Makkah. He sent Khâlid bin Walid ؓ at the head of thirty soldiers to break Uzza, the idol of Banu Kinânah and to pull down its temple. Khâlid bin Walid ؓ went and broke Uzza to pieces and razed its temple to the ground. Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ was sent to destroy Suwa', the idol of Banu Hudhail. When Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ reached the spot, the priest said, "How will you be able to overpower it?" Amr ؓ said, "Just watch." Saying this he entered the temple and broke the idol to pieces. Seeing this, the priest renounced idolatry and embraced Islam on the spot. Sa'd bin Zaid Ashhali ؓ was sent to Qadid to destroy Manât. The priests were sure the Muslims would fail in their task but they saw with their own eyes the believers break the idols and pull the temple down. All idols and temples were destroyed.

The first priority being completed, the Prophet ﷺ resumed his mission of preaching Islam through Muslim missionaries and sent them near and far. Khâlid bin Walid ؓ was sent to Banu Jadhimah with the order to avoid a fight. But the situation demanded it and a few from Banu Jadhimah were killed. When Khâlid bin Walid ؓ returned to Makkah with the booty, the Prophet ﷺ expressed regret and sent back the booty along with blood money through Ali ؓ.

## Battle of Hunain

The resounding victory of the Muslims over the Quraish and the ever-increasing conversions to Islam frightened the enemies of Islam out of their senses. Those tribes who were not allies of the Muslims were disturbed and worried. The Hawāzin and the Thaqif were the two tribes who were most hostile to Islam and they also were old arch-rivals of the Quraish. Living between Tā'if and Makkah, they expected to become the next target of attack by the Muslims. The Hawāzin Chief, Mālik bin Auf brought around him all the tribes of Banu Hawāzin and Banu Thaqif to fight against the Muslims. Several other tribes like Nasr, Jusham and Sa'd also joined hands with the Hawāzin. Their troops concentrated at Autās. On receiving this information, the Prophet ﷺ sent Abdullah bin Abu Hadrā Aslami as a spy. He came back with the news that the enemy had already completed its military preparations and they were ready to fight.

The Prophet ﷺ ordered quick preparations and led an army of twelve thousands comprising ten thousand men from the *Muhājirin* and the *Ansār* and two thousand new entrants to Islam from Makkah. The Muslim army reached Hunain on Shawwāl 10, 8 AH. The enemy had already taken its position in the depressions and hollows and the craters of the valley. As the Muslim army started descending into the valley in the half light of morning, the enemy suddenly rose from their place of ambush and started to attack with full force.

Since the Muslims were caught unaware by the celebrated archers of Hawāzin, they could not withstand the sudden onslaught of the enemy and their flanks fell back. The two thousand Makkans were the first to flee in terror no one paying attention to the other. The Prophet ﷺ was then on the right side of the valley along with Abu Bakr, Umar Faruq, Ali, Abbās, Fadl bin Abbās, and Abu Sufyān bin Al-Hārith. The Prophet ﷺ had all the while stood firm in his place, riding his white mule without any fear or nervousness. Abbās bin Abdul-Muttalib was holding the bridle of his mule, while the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ was calling aloud: "Verily, I am the Prophet without falsehood; I am son of Abdul-Muttalib."

When the Prophet ﷺ saw his men in confusion, he said, "O Abbās, call the Muslims to this side." The Muslims recognized his voice and rushed towards the Prophet ﷺ. However, not more than about a hundred men could rally around the Prophet ﷺ for the rest were barred by the intervening enemy and resumed fighting from where they had been.

Calling out *Allāhu Akbar* (Allāh is the Most Great), the Prophet ﷺ advanced with his mule and launched such a fierce attack that the enemy plunged into disorder and confusion and fled from the scene. Now the Muslim troops gathered and bore down upon the army, which resulted in a smashing defeat of the enemies of Islam. At the outset, when the Muslims were suffering reverses, a rude fellow from Makkah who had joined the Muslim army but was still not strong in faith, let out his antipathy to Islam saying, "The spell of their sorcery has ended today." Another person of the same category remarked, "Their flight will not stop before they get to the sea." A man named Shaibah stepped forward towards the Prophet ﷺ with the evil intention of taking revenge on him but fell down unconscious.

The Hawāzin paid a heavy toll in the battle before escaping in terror. Banu Thaḡif then attempted to fill the gap but in vain. They could not resist the advancing flood of Muslim troops and fled from the battle field after suffering terrible loss of life. Notable chieftains of the enemy were killed but their commander-in-chief, Mālik bin Auf escaped unhurt and took refuge in Tā'if. A part of the fugitives gathered in Autās while another fled to Nakhlah for their lives. The Prophet ﷺ sent military detachments chasing them and fighting took place at both locations again, they could not withstand the heavy onslaught of the Muslims and gave in.

The Muslims returned victorious with booty and captives. When the captives and spoils of Hunain were brought to the Prophet ﷺ, he ordered them to be taken to Jirānah and appointed Mas'ūd bin Amr Ghifārī to be in charge. The spoils of this battle, known as the Battle of Hunain, went up to six thousand captives, twenty-four thousand camels, more than forty thousand sheep and goats, and four thousand *Uqīyyah* (a measure of weight) of silver.

## Siege of Tâ'if

The fortress of Mâlik bin Auf was located in route from the valley of Hunain to Tâ'if and the Prophet ﷺ demolished it along with the fortress of Atam. He found the people of Tâ'if wanting to give battle and so they were besieged. The siege dragged on for twenty days. During this period people from the surrounding areas began accepting Islam. During the battle of Hunain only four Muslims were martyred while during the siege of Tâ'if the number of Muslim martyrs reached twelve. The Prophet ﷺ, at last, raised the siege and returned to Ji'rânah with his men and distributed the spoils.

A deputation of the Hawâzin came there and called on the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ and sought forgiveness for the sake of Halimah Sa'diyah. He asked them to come at the time of *Zuhr* prayer when all the Muslims would congregate for the prayer. When they did as told, the Prophet ﷺ gave his reply, "Whatever was apportioned to me and the Banu 'Abdul-Muttalib is yours." Thereupon the *Muhâjirin* and the *Ansâr* said, "Whatever share has been given to us is passed on to the Prophet ﷺ." Saying this, they set all the captives of Hawâzin free. Thus, in a very short duration, about six thousand prisoners were released. Among the captives was also Shimâ' bint Halimah Sa'diyah, the foster-sister of the Prophet ﷺ. When she was produced before the Prophet ﷺ, she said, "O Prophet of Allâh, I am your foster-sister." The Prophet ﷺ asked for proof, and she replied, "The bite you gave me on my leg. The mark is still there." The Prophet ﷺ accepted the proof and stretched out his robe for her to sit on and treated her courteously. He gave her the choice of living with him in affection and honor or going back to her people. She chose to go back to her tribe. And the Prophet ﷺ gave her a bondsman, a slave girl and a considerable quantity of wealth and goods.

## Deep Love of the Ansâr for the Messenger ﷺ

When the Prophet ﷺ began to distribute the spoils at Ji'rânah, he gave a large portion to the Quraish whose faith in Islam, he wanted to strengthen. Since most of the Makkans were from the Quraish, and

they were relatives and fellow-countrymen of the Prophet ﷺ, some of the young men among the *Ansâr* aired their grievances at the meager gifts given to them and the large portion given to the Prophet's relatives and compatriots.

The Prophet ﷺ also got wind of what was going on among the younger section of the *Ansâr*. The Prophet of Allâh ﷺ ordered the *Ansâr* to assemble in an enclosure. He then said addressing them, "Did you say such and such?" The *Ansâr* submitted in reply: "Our young men have said so no doubt, but none of the discerning, respectable and mature persons has ever thought it nor has such a thought ever entered our minds."

Having heard this, the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ said: "O the *Ansâr*, did I not come to you when you were astray, and Allâh guided you through me?" The *Ansâr* replied, "Yes, indeed, Allâh and His Prophet are most kind and generous." The Prophet ﷺ again asked them, "You were divided and He softened your hearts and you united through me?" They again submitted, "Yes, indeed, you did us this great favor." The Prophet ﷺ asked once again, "You were poor and Allâh made you rich through me?" The *Ansâr* admitted, "Yes, indeed, Allâh and His Messenger did this great favor for us." The Prophet ﷺ again asked them, "O *Ansâr*, why don't you speak to me?" He then added, "I would have acknowledged it if you had replied: 'You came discredited and we believed you; you came deserted and we helped you; you were a fugitive and we gave you shelter; you were poor and we comforted you.' O *Ansâr*, are you not satisfied that these men should take away camels and goats while you go back with the Prophet of Allâh?"

The *Ansâr* wept bitterly until tears ran down their beards. The Prophet of Allâh ﷺ further said, "Had migration not been destined, I would have been one of the *Ansâr* myself. If all the people go one way, and the *Ansâr* take another, I would take the way of the *Ansâr*. O Allâh! Have mercy on the *Ansâr* and their children and their children." We can not even conceive of the joys, the *Ansâr* felt at this time. The Prophet of Allâh ﷺ let them understand that these people were new entrants to Islam and they were given more so they would be reconciled to Islam, not by way of any special favor.

## First Governor of Makkah

On the way back from Jil'rānah, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ entered Makkah to perform *Umrah*. Before leaving, he installed as Governor of Makkah, a young man of a little more than twenty years. Also he left Mu'adh bin Jabal ؓ as an instructor of the Qur'ān and Islamic injunctions. The young governor named Attāb bin Usa'id was given the significant post for his profound fondness of religious knowledge. A dirham per day was fixed for him so that he would not depend on anyone else for his needs. He was the first man in Islam to perform *Hajj* as a ruler.

That year the Muslims and non-Muslims performed *Hajj* according to their own tenets and none got in the way of other. However, they performed their duties so close to one another that the polytheists found ample opportunity to observe the good deeds and moral excellence of the Muslims.

It is worth mentioning here that Urwah bin Mas'ud, a chieftain of Tā'if was outside when Tā'if was raided by Muslim troops in 8 AH. Urwah now followed the Prophet ﷺ when he was on his way to Al-Madinah and confessed Islam at his hand before his entry into Al-Madinah. Urwah ؓ then sought permission of the Prophet ﷺ to preach Islam among his people. He ﷺ said, "Your people take pride in that they could not be defeated by the Muslim army. When you preach Islam to them, you might be killed." Urwah ؓ submitted, "My people love me very much and I hope they will listen to me." Thus the Prophet ﷺ acceded to his request. Following this, he went to Tā'if, ascended a raised place and began to call the people to accept Islam. The people of Tā'if surrounded him on all sides and showered arrows on him, which led to his martyrdom. On being asked about the retaliation, Urwah ؓ said to his relatives: "By the Grace of Allāh, I have been honored with martyrdom. Now my sole desire is that I am buried beside those Companions of the Prophet ﷺ who were martyred and buried during the Muslim siege of Tā'if." It was in this year that the Prophet's son Ibrāhīm was born to Maria Qibtiyah (Coptic). Also in this year his daughter Zainab ؓ passed away. The same year, a wooden pulpit was made for the Prophet ﷺ, and he

wrote a letter to Mundhir bin Sāwa. Mundhir bin Sāwa ❹ had already embraced Islam in response to an earlier letter sent to him, according to which he began to charge the *Jizyah* (protection tax) from the Jews and Magians of his territory.

### **The Ninth Year of Migration**

Following the Prophet's return to Al-Madinah after the conquest of Makkah and Hunain, the pagans of Arabia started coming into the fold of Islam. At the outset of 9 AH, people from the far off regions of Arabia began to send their representatives to the Prophet of Allāh ❺ to announce their declaration of Islam. That is why, 9 AH came to be called the Year of Deputations. From the temporal standpoint too, the Prophet ❺ had become the ruler of Arabia. The believers had *Zakāt* made obligatory on them, while the disbelievers had to pay a nominal amount as *Jizyah* (protection tax). In order to collect the *Zakāt*, tax collectors were sent to various tribes. At times the tax collectors suffered resistance and even were martyred, while on other occasions they punished the wrong doers. At last, a regular system of *Zakāt* was established.

### **Expedition to Tabuk**

The Ghassanide King collected a big army to avenge his ignominious defeat at Mu'tah. He then sought help from Heraclius of Rome, who was pleased to send an army forty thousand strong to his help and decided to march with the large army. The monk named Abu Āmir, referred to before, went to the Byzantine monarch, Caesar with the sole purpose of inducing him to invade Al-Madinah. Abu Āmir was also regularly but secretly in correspondence with the hypocrites of Al-Madinah, who had already started construction work of a mosque named Dirār Mosque. News of such serious matters kept pouring into Al-Madinah for some time. Military movements of this magnitude could not be ignored. The Prophet of Allāh ❺ gave a call to the believers in general to come and join hands to take on the massive army of Heraclius. The Muslims from all areas of the country rushed to Al-Madinah in response to the call.



The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ generally kept the military preparations and movements a secret to keep the hypocrites and the enemy in the dark. But, since such large-scale preparations were not possible secretly and silently, the Prophet ﷺ announced that the preparations were to give battle to the Roman army. It was the year of a bumper crop and the time of reaping the harvest was upon them and some of the people felt a little unwilling to leave and lose the crop.

Heraclius and his ministers had brought the hypocrites to their side as a part of their military campaign. The hypocrites were constantly in league with the Jews of Al-Madinah and were holding regular consultations against the Muslims. A band of twelve hypocrites built their own separate mosque as a center for carrying out their hostile activities and anti-Islamic propaganda, and for creating a rift among the Muslims. When they saw the Muslims engaged in preparing for the impending battle, they started passing discouraging remarks along with mentioning the hardships of such a long and arduous journey. What they wanted was the Caesar to invade Al-Madinah and to frustrate all the efforts of the Muslims to stop this Christian movement towards Al-Madinah.

The Prophet ﷺ had, on the other hand, ordered all the Companions to join the expedition. Since coming face to face with the massive Christian army meant large-scale preparations from the Muslim camp which needed provisions, mounts, and weapons in large quantities and numbers. The Prophet ﷺ had, therefore, made an appeal to the Muslim masses to lavishly contribute to the war fund.

The Muslims had also showed an astonishing response to the appeal. Uthmān bin Affān ؓ was about to dispatch his trade caravan to Syria, but contributed the whole of it to the Muslim campaign. Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ contributed all goods and chattels of his household, entrusting his wife and children to Allāh the Almighty, while Umar Fāruq ؓ divided everything in his house in two and gave one half to the fund being raised by the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ.

The poor among the Muslims who lived on their sweat and labor contributed their wages to the Muslim war preparations. The hypocrites didn't give any contributions. An army of thirty thousand



strong collected in Al-Madinah. The Muslim army could hardly prepared footwear because the Prophet ﷺ said to them that footwear raises foot soldiers to the category of cavalry.

### Islamic Army's Departure:

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ set out for Tabuk with an army of 30,000 men from Al-Madinah. The campaign was undertaken in the month of Rajab, 9. AH. They had hardly covered a distance of one hour and reached Dhi Awān when the hypocrites submitted, "We have built a mosque. Please offer prayer therein to bless it." The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Presently, I am busy making preparations for the journey; I shall see to it on my return." Departing from Al-Madinah, he ordered the army to pitch the camp at Thaniya-tul-Wada and he put Muhammad bin Maslamah Ansāri ؓ in charge of Al-Madinah.

The chief of the hypocrites, Abdullah bin Ubai also left Al-Madinah with his band of people and camped at the low-lying area of the Thaniya-tul-Wada. He apparently wanted to show that he also accompanied the Muslim troops, but in fact, he broke away from the Muslims and came back to Al-Madinah with his men. However, a few of them went along to work as spies for the forces hostile to Islam. The Prophet ﷺ had left behind Ali ؓ to look after his family.

The hypocrites used this as an opportunity to spread false rumors about Ali ؓ. They implied that the Prophet ﷺ gave little importance to Ali ؓ and, therefore, left him alone in Al-Madinah. When his patience ran out, he hurried from Al-Madinah and joining the Prophet ﷺ at Al-Jurf asked, "The hypocrites are saying such and such about me and so I have come to you." The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said, "They are liars. I have left you behind to look after my household; so go back." In order to sooth his feelings the Prophet ﷺ further said, "You are to me as Hārūn was to Musa, except that there will be no Prophet after me." Ali ؓ returned to Al-Madinah pacified and satisfied.

When the Muslim army arrived at Al-Hijr (presently Al-Qura Valley), the destroyed territory of Thamud, the Prophet ﷺ exhorted, "Pass on swiftly seeking forgiveness of Allāh even without drinking a drop of water from its wells." When the Muslim troops had to pass a night at

Al-Hijr the Prophet ﷺ told them that no one was to go alone out of the camp. When passing through the ruins of the deserted territory, he covered his face with his mantle and drove his mount fast. He also instructed his Companions to hurry up seeking the forgiveness of Allāh the Almighty while passing through the settlements of the tyrants and sinners lest they be overtaken by what they (the Thamud) had suffered.

### At Tabuk:

When the Muslim expedition arrived at the stream of Tabuk near the Syrian border, Heraclius recognized him as a true Prophet and withdrew out of fear. The Christian troops and the Ghassanide king also left their positions and cleared out of the area of the Muslim force. Tabuk lay at a distance of fourteen or fifteen stages from Al-Madinah where the Prophet ﷺ stayed for about twenty days. During this period, Yuhannah bin Ru'bah, the ruler of Ailah appeared before the Prophet ﷺ to offer his obedience to him, his request was accepted in return for *Jizyah* (tax) which he paid on the spot. The people of Jarbā' also followed suit and earned peace on the same conditions, and the same came to pass with the people of Adhruh.

Dumat-ul-Jandal was located near Tabuk whose ruler Ukaidir bin Abdul-Malik was a Christian and belonged to Banu Kindah tribe. He refused to obey the Prophet ﷺ and showed arrogance. He sent Khâlid bin Walid ؓ at the head of a detachment saying, "You will see Ukaidir hunting a white antelope." When Khâlid ؓ came near to his palace after a night's journey, he saw an amazing event.

It was a hot summer moonlit night, Ukaidir was enjoying his rest with his wife on top of his palace. All of a sudden a white antelope came out from the adjacent forest and started rubbing its horns against the gate of his palace. His wife drew her husband's attention to this. Ukaidir, along with his brother Hassân, chased the animal on horseback. He had covered a short distance when Khâlid's detachment surrounded them. Ukaidir was captured alive while his brother was killed in the encounter. His beautiful silken garment was sent ahead through a courier and Ukaidir himself was brought by Khâlid bin Walid ؓ. The Prophet ﷺ spared the life of Ukaidir who showed his obedience and

promised to pay the *Jizyah*. After returning to his palace, he sent to the Prophet ﷺ two thousand camels, eight hundred horses, four hundred pieces of armor and four hundred lances and was granted a peace treaty.

### **Dirâr Mosque burnt down**

When the rulers of the Syrian frontier were totally subdued, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions decided to go back to Al-Madinah. At a distance of one hour from Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ sent Mâlik bin Dukhshum Sâlimi and Ma'n bin Adi Ajli ؓ to burn down and demolish the mosque built by the hypocrites, the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ was instructed to do so from the Verse: "And as for those who put up a mosque by way of harm..." (9:107)

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions came back to Al-Madinah in Ramadân, 9 AH. [According to the occurrence of events, his return to Al-Madinah seems in the month of Rajab.]

Ka'b bin Mâlik, Murârah bin Rabî' and Hilâl bin Umayyah ؓ were the three Companions who did not join the Muslim expedition to Tabuk on account of their indecision. On the return of the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ all three appeared before him and confessed their faults. The Prophet ﷺ forbade everyone to speak to them. For fifty days they kept seeking the forgiveness of Allâh, then Allâh granted them a pardon. Before they were pardoned, no one including their family members would even respond to their salutations.

They felt forsaken and abandoned and the whole world seemed to have closed on them. When the King of Ghassan came to know of this ordeal, he sent a courier to Ka'b bin Mâlik ؓ with a letter in which he had written: "You are a man of wealth and honor and Muhammad has ill-treated you to the extreme. You better come to me. I shall hold you in the highest honor and grant you very good treatment." Having gone through this letter, Ka'b ؓ threw it into an oven.

When the repentance of Ka'b bin Mâlik ؓ was accepted, the Prophet ﷺ and the Companions congratulated him and he gave away all his wealth and property in the way of Allâh.

## The People of Tā'if accept Islam

When the people of Tā'if heard the news of the Muslim's successes in Tabuk they were totally sure that they were no match for the Muslim force. Urwah bin Mas'ud ؓ had been martyred in Tā'if, but his son Abul-Mulāih along with a few others came to Al-Madinah and embraced Islam. On the Prophet's return from Tabuk, Abd Yālil bin Amr came to Al-Madinah at the head of a deputation of the people of Tā'if. He allowed them to camp in a corner of the Prophet's Mosque. Abd Yālil and his fellows accepted Islam and took an oath of allegiance at the hand of the Prophet ﷺ on behalf of their people. The Prophet ﷺ sent Uthmān bin Abu Al-Ās ؓ there as their ruler, and Mughirah bin Shu'bah ؓ to demolish their temple of idol Lāt. From the treasures of the temple, the blood money of Urwah bin Mas'ud ؓ was paid and the rest was distributed among the Muslims.

The deputations started arriving after the Prophet's return to Al-Madinah. They would come to accept Islam and then return to their people along with some Companions to teach them Islam. He would give gifts and rewards at the time of their departure. Meanwhile Ali ؓ was sent to the Tai' tribe at the head of a detachment, which stormed the region and Adi bin Hātim, the ruler of the Tai' ran away. However, Hātim's daughter was brought as a captive.

She requested the Prophet ﷺ to favor her. He set her free but asked her to stay until a noble man was available to take her to her region. In a few days the people of Syria came to the Prophet ﷺ and he sent her with them along with some clothes and provisions.

When the girl reached her brother Adi bin Hātim, he asked his sister: "What kind of man is the Prophet?" She replied, "He is a man to meet with; he is very noble and polite and a great benefactor." Adi got right up and left for Al-Madinah as a representative of his people. The Prophet ﷺ gave him respect, took him to his home from the Prophet's Mosque and seated him on his bed. On the way home a woman stopped him (the Prophet ﷺ) and he stayed with her until she finished talking. Such a kind and noble gesture affected Adi. Following this the Prophet ﷺ gave him some good counsel. At the end, Adi bin

Hâtim stretched out his hand, took the oath of allegiance, became a Muslim and returned to his people.

### **First Deputy of the Prophet of Allâh**

After returning from Tabuk the arrival of deputations kept the Prophet ﷺ so busy that he could not spare himself to lead the *Hajj* caravan to Makkah. He delegated Abu Bakr ؓ to perform the job. Abu Bakr ؓ departed at the head of three hundred *Hajj* pilgrims along with twenty camels from the Prophet ﷺ and five of his own to be sacrificed during *Hajj*. Soon after the departure of the *Hajj* caravan under Abu Bakr ؓ, forty Verses of *Sûrat At-Taubah* were revealed. These Verses delineated some essential injunctions like banning the polytheists' entry into the zone of the Sacred Mosque from the next year, banning the naked circumambulation of the House of Allâh, and the fulfilling of the covenant made with the Prophet ﷺ. These injunctions were supposed to be announced on the occasion of the *Hajj*.

The Prophet ﷺ immediately sent Ali ؓ riding on his (the Prophet's) dromedary with the instructions that these Verses be read out to the audience on the Day of Sacrifice after the *Hajj* was completed. Ali ؓ traveled quickly and caught up with the caravan of Abu Bakr ؓ at Dhul-Hulaifah. Abu Bakr ؓ asked him whether he had come as the commander or the commanded. "I have come as the commanded and you will remain the commander. I have been entrusted with the duty of reading out these Verses." On reaching Makkah, Abu Bakr ؓ oversaw the Muslims perform the rites of *Hajj* while Ali ؓ read out the Verses of *Sûrat At-Taubah*.

The same year the Prophet's daughter Umm Kulthum ؓ passed away, *Hajj* was declared as obligatory and was performed under the guidance of a Muslim leader and Abu Bakr ؓ gave them instructions on the rites of *Hajj*. The polytheists were given a duration of only four months to vacate the sacred zone otherwise Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ would bear no responsibility whatsoever concerning them. Hearing this announcement even those in Makkah who had remained polytheists accepted Islam. Abdullah bin Ubai died the same year.

## The Tenth Year of Migration

From Muharram 10 AH up to the end of the year, deputations kept arriving and Arab tribes continued joining the caravan of Islam. In Rabi' Al-Âkhir, Khâlid bin Walid ؓ was sent to Najrân and its surrounding areas accompanied by four hundred Companions with instructions to call the people thrice to accept Islam and avoid fighting. They were pleased to embrace Islam when Khâlid bin Walid ؓ reached there. Banu Al-Hârith bin Ka'b was one of the tribes who was converted to Islam. The Prophet ﷺ called Khâlid ؓ and the Companions back while Amr bin Hazm ؓ was sent to those areas as an instructor of Islam.

In Ramadân 10 AH, a deputation from Ghassan tribe came, which consisted of three members. They accepted Islam with all pleasure and returned to their people, but they refused to come into the fold of Islam.

In Shawwâl 10 AH, a seven-member deputation from Banu Salâmân came headed by its chief Habib bin Amr, and returned after accepting Islam. One day Habib bin Amr ؓ asked the Prophet ﷺ, "Which is the most excellent deed in Islam?" He replied, "It is to offer prayer on time."

During the same period came the deputation of ten members from Azd and accepted Islam, by their preaching the whole tribe converted to Islam. For the same reason a fight broke out between Azd and Jursh tribes. Before the fight, Jursh people had sent their two men to Al-Madinah to enquire about the Prophet ﷺ. When these men approached the Prophet ﷺ, he said to them, "The Jursh and the Azd engaged themselves in fighting against one another and the Jursh were defeated." It had happened the same day. When both went back and related the event, the entire Jursh tribe accepted Islam. The same year, Ali ؓ was sent to Yemen to teach them *Tauhid* and forbid polytheism. With his efforts, Hamdân, the well known tribe of Yemen, embraced Islam entirely. During this year the deputation from Murâd tribe came after breaking away from Muluk Kindah and accepted Islam. The deputation of Banu Abdul-Qais also came headed by Jârud bin Amr and they all converted to Islam from Christianity. They went back and brought their whole tribe to Islam.

## **Musailamah Kadhdhâb**

In the same year the deputation of Banu Hanifah came from Yamâmah which included Musailamah bin Hubaib Kadhdhâb (liar), Jurjân bin Ghanam, Talq bin Ali and Salmân bin Hanzalah. They stayed for a fortnight and learned the Qur'ân from Ubai bin Ka'b. During this period, other persons used to be in the company of the Prophet ﷺ, but Musailamah was away most of the time, with the permission of the Prophet ﷺ, under the pretext of looking after the belongings of the group. Among the deputations which came during this year were those of Banu Kindah, Banu Kinânah and Hadramout and accepted Islam. In the same year, Wâ'il bin Hujr appeared before the Prophet ﷺ and embraced Islam. Expressing his joy over this, the Prophet ﷺ asked Mu'âwiyah bin Abu Sufyân ؓ to make him his guest. On the way to his home Mu'âwiyah ؓ was on foot and Wâ'il bin Hujr was on his mount. Mu'âwiyah ؓ asked Wâ'il for his footwear because his feet were burning from the heat. "I shall not give them for I have already worn them," Wâ'il replied rather rudely. "Well, let me ride behind you," Mu'âwiyah ؓ proposed as an alternative. "You can't ride the mount of a king," Wâ'il replied with an air of arrogance. "But my feet are burning," Mu'âwiyah ؓ spoke rather painfully. "It is enough for you to walk in the shadow of my camel," Wâ'il retorted. This is the same Wâ'il that when he approached Mu'âwiyah ؓ during his caliphate, he showed him so much respect.

## **Mubâhalah**

This means mutual condemnation and the asking of God's punishment to come down on the one who is false. The same year a Christian deputation came from Najrân along with their chief Abdul-Masih and bishop Abu Hârithah, they were 60 people with 24 from the distinguished families. They entered the Prophet's Mosque and started bitter arguments. Meanwhile, the earlier Verses of *Sûrat Al-Imrân* and the Verse regarding *Mubâhalah* were sent down. When the Prophet ﷺ asked them to accept Islam, they showed rudeness. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Isâ (Jesus) was raised out of clay by Allâh like



Adam." "No, Jesus was the son of Allāh," they contended. The Prophet ﷺ said, "If you are true in your claim then come along to a field with me and my relatives, and both the parties shall sit separately and say: 'May the torment of Allāh descend on the one who is a liar.'" Hearing this they kept silent. The next morning the Prophet ﷺ took Ali, Fātimah, Hasan and Husain ﷺ with him and said to the Christians, "When I invoke Allāh to send down His torment on the one who is telling a lie, you say, 'May it be so'." The straightforwardness of the Prophet ﷺ frightened them so much that they declared: "We don't want to enter into *Mubāhalah*." "Accept Islam if you don't want *Mubāhalah*, and become one with all the other Muslims," the Prophet ﷺ said firmly. "We don't accept this offer either," they replied. "Be ready then to either pay the (*Jizyah*) tax or measure your swords with us. "We shall pay the tax," they said. The Prophet ﷺ later said, "Had they accepted the *Mubāhalah*, they would have been destroyed up to their hairs and nails." When going back, they wished to have an escort sent with them. The Prophet ﷺ sent Abu Ubaidha bin Al-Jarrāh ﷺ with them and, after a short time, all the Christians became Muslims.

All the Yemenite tribes and their ruler Badhān had already turned to Islam. The Prophet ﷺ had allowed his rule to continue intact, but he died that year. Following this, he installed Shahr bin Badhān, Amir bin Shahr Hamdāni, Abu Musa Ash'ari, Ali bin Umayyah, and Mu'adh bin Jabal ﷺ as rulers of different parts of Yemen. Also, Ali ﷺ was sent at the head of a few Companions with the instructions that arms must not be raised against any unless it was done by others first. He was sent with the sole purpose of collecting *Zakāt* and charitable donations.

## The Farewell Pilgrimage

These events were followed by the month of Dhul-Qa'dah, 10 AH, when the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ set out on the journey to the House of Allāh to perform *Hajj*. A large number of Companions accompanied him with a hundred sacrificial camels. This caravan from Al-Madinah entered Makkah on Sunday, Dhul-Hijjah 4. Ali ﷺ joined the caravan from Yemen and performed *Hajj* with the Prophet ﷺ.



## The Farewell Address

On this occasion the Prophet ﷺ taught his Companions the rites of *Hajj* and delivered an address at Arafât. He said after praising and glorifying Allâh: "O people! Behold I am not sure of meeting you here next year or after that. O people! Your blood and your property are inviolable like the sacredness of this day in this month in this city of yours. Do no wrong to others lest you are wronged. The Devil has lost hope of ever being worshipped by those who pray. However, he will be followed in lesser matters. Therefore, you should shun his company. O people! You have rights on your womenfolk and they on you. Be good to them. Behold! Whoever holds anything in trust should return it to the person who has entrusted him with it. I leave among you two things, one the Book of Allâh and the second is the *Sunnah* of His Messenger. You will not go astray while you hold to the Book and the *Sunnah*. You will be asked if I have conveyed the Message of Allâh and fulfilled the mission?" "We testify that you have conveyed the Message of Allâh," the Companions replied with one voice. The Prophet ﷺ said, "O Allâh! Be Witness."

The Prophet ﷺ spoke addressing his Companions in words and manner, which are used when bidding farewell or saying good-bye. This is why this *Hajj* is called the Farewell *Hajj* (*Hajjat-ul-Wada'*). More than one hundred thousand Muslims performed their *Hajj* that year under the guidance of the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ. That day he also said: "These are the best words ever spoken by any of the Prophets: 'There is no true God except Allâh Alone, Who has no partner to Him, all praise is due for Him, He has power on every thing'." On the day of Arafât, the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ was still in Makkah when the following Verse was revealed:

"This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." (5:3)

Most of the Companions appeared jubilant at the revelation of the above Verse, for they thought that their religion was perfected and completed. But a few among them, like Abu Bakr ؓ, who had deeper

insight and wisdom, grew sad for the Verse indicated their separation from the Prophet ﷺ, because the existence of the Prophethood would no longer be required after the perfection of the religion.

## The Consolation of Ali ﷺ

During the *Hajj* some of the fellows of Ali ﷺ who had been with him to Yemen complained to the Prophet ﷺ about Ali ﷺ. Some of the misunderstandings of the people of Yemen had given rise to these misgivings. Addressing the Companions at Ghadir Khum, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ said admiring Ali, "The one who is my friend is the friend of Ali and the one who is an enemy of Ali is my enemy." Following the address Umar ﷺ congratulated Ali ﷺ saying, "From this day on you are a very special friend of mine." The Prophet ﷺ then came back to Al-Madinah and his son Ibrahim ﷺ passed away.

## The Eleventh Year of Migration

### The Sickness of the Prophet ﷺ

In Muharram 11 AH, the Prophet ﷺ developed a temperature which kept getting higher. When the news of his illness spread, the evildoers had an opportunity to start their treacherous activities. Musailamah, Tulaihah bin Khuwailid, Aswad and Sajāh bint Hārith all claimed they were prophets. They thought that they would also achieve success due to their claims like the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ did. But Allāh the Almighty put the seal on the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ and demonstrated it once again by driving each one of them to an ignominious failure and defeat for their heinous claim. Musailamah the liar gained notoriety in Yamāmah and Aswad bin Ka'b Ansi in Yemen.

One day the Prophet ﷺ came out while sick with a bandage tied around his head because of a headache. Addressing the Companions he said, "Last night I saw in a dream that I had two bracelets of gold on my wrists and I threw them away out of dislike. I interpreted this dream to mean that the two bracelets stand for the men of Yamāmah and Yemen (Musailamah the liar, and Aswad the liar)." Aswad the liar

was killed by a person named Firoz during the lifetime of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ, while Musailamah the liar was killed by Wahshi, the killer of Hamzah ؓ during the caliphate of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ. Wahshi used to say: "I have killed the best man while I was in a state of disbelief and the worst man after I became a believer in Islam."

### Jihād in the way of Allāh from the Sick-bed:

When the Prophet ﷺ felt a little relief on Safar 26, 11 AH, he ordered to make hasty preparations to take on the Romans because of menacing news from the borders of Syria and Palestine. The next day he appointed Usāmah bin Zaid bin Hārithah ؓ as the commander of the Muslim detachment and said to him, "Hurry up to the land of your father and go quickly so that they won't have time to find out about your movements. You will be, Allāh willing, crowned with success."

Marching on the Romans was necessary because due to the events of Yamāmah and Yemen and the Christian conspiracies against Islam, it had once again encouraged the Romans to turn against Arabia. The departure of the Muslim troops was so necessary and so significant that in spite of the severity of his illness, the Prophet ﷺ got up to fix the standard of Usāmah ؓ with his own hands and let them go ahead. He had ordered all the distinguished Companions to join the detachment. Thus Abu Bakr, Abbās, Umar, Uthmān and Ali ؓ were all going under the command of Usāmah ؓ. However, Ali and Abbās ؓ were held back in Al-Madinah to attend to the Prophet ﷺ during his illness. Usāmah ؓ took his detachment out of Al-Madinah and made camp at Jurf about 5 km from the city. Abu Bakr and Umar ؓ would come to the Prophet ﷺ from there with the permission of the army commander Usāmah ؓ and then go back.

In the meantime the Prophet's condition grew worse while Usāmah ؓ and his troops anxiously awaited the news about him. The Prophet ﷺ also gave his approval to their holding up at Jurf. However, some people expressed their misgivings at the commandership of Usāmah ؓ because his father had once been a slave. When the Prophet ﷺ heard about the disapproval, he summoned the people and said, "Why there is an objection against his appointment as commander

when his father had already been the commander of previous Muslim detachments?" He further added, "Zaid is among the foremost Muslims and commands a place of distinction in Islam." Those raising the objection subsided, showed their repentance and accepted Usamah ﷺ as the commander of the Muslim detachment.

### Illness increases:

The illness went on increasing day by day. The Prophet ﷺ sought permission from his wives to stay in the room of Aishah ﷺ, which they readily acceded to. He entered the apartment of Aishah ﷺ and then came out to say, "I tell you to fear Allāh. May Allāh guide you all, I leave Him with you and entrust you to Him. I am a warner against Hell and a giver of glad tidings of Jannah (Paradise). Jannah is for those who seek not oppression in the earth, nor corruption. The next life is for those who ward off evil. Never give yourselves to arrogance and vainglory." After a pause the Prophet ﷺ said, "My family members should wash my body," and added, "leave the spot for a while after putting my body beside the grave so that angels may perform their funeral prayers in groups one after another. The males of my family should come first to perform their funeral prayers followed by their women." The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ lay bed-ridden for three successive days.

### Asking Abu Bakr ﷺ to lead the Prayers:

The Prophet ﷺ deputed Abu Bakr ﷺ to lead the Muslims in prayers in the Prophet's Mosque. Aishah ﷺ submitted, "My father is not able to serve in this capacity for he is too tender-hearted to do this. Please ask Umar to do the job." He said, "No, Abu Bakr will do it." Abu Bakr ﷺ was leading the prayer when the Prophet ﷺ felt a bit better and came into the mosque. As soon as Abu Bakr ﷺ came to know of the Prophet's arrival, he tried to get back, but the Prophet ﷺ motioned for him not to leave his place. Thus the Prophet ﷺ led the prayer sitting while Abu Bakr ﷺ was standing in the prayer. The *Sahihain* (*Sahih Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*) report that one day, during his illness, the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ asked for a pen and paper. Since he was then undergoing the intensity of his illness, Umar ﷺ intervened to say that

he must not be put to any trouble for the Qur'ân is enough for us all as he has already said. But some of the Companions were in favor of letting him dictate. The Prophet ﷺ disliked the clamor of voices and asked the people to leave. At the time he was suffering from a violent headache and this was the reason why Umar ؓ had suggested not to trouble him in any way. When his pain had subsided a little, he called the people in and said, "Make it a practice to keep the visiting deputations happy with gifts and rewards. Drive the polytheists out of the Arabian Peninsula and send the army of Usamah ؓ. Show kindness to the Ansâr and forgive their mistakes and consider none superior to Abu Bakr ؓ in your assemblies." Following this he fell unconscious again due to the pain.

### **A little before Death**

Ali, Abbâs, Fadl bin Abbâs, Abu Bakr, and Umar ؓ remained at the service of the Prophet ﷺ most of the time during his fatal illness. The Prophet of Allâh ﷺ disliked anything to be left with him at the time of his final departure. He, therefore, asked Âishah ؓ to give away in charity five or six dinars remaining with her. He extorted Ali ؓ to take care of the prayers and relatives. Abu Bakr ؓ led thirteen prayers in all during the Prophet's illness. On Monday, Rabi' Al-Awwal 12, 11 AH, he came out with a bandage tied around his head when Abu Bakr ؓ was leading the dawn prayer. Following this he went back home and lay down with his head in the lap of Âishah ؓ. Abu Bakr ؓ also left for home happy and satisfied. Just at that moment Abdur Rahmân bin Abu Bakr ؓ entered the room with a green toothstick (*Siwâk*—a natural toothbrush) in his hand. The Prophet ﷺ looked at it in a way that she thought he wanted it. She then took the toothstick from her brother, chewed it a little to make it soft and pliable, and then she gave it to him. He rubbed his teeth with it, and then leaving it, he put his head against Âishah's breast and stretched out his legs.

### **Death**

A cup of water was kept near him. He dipped his hand in it and wiped his face with it, saying, "O Allâh, help me in the pangs of

death." Aishah ﷺ had been keeping her eyes fixed on his face when his eyes became glazed saying, "With the Highest Companionship in Jannah (Paradise)." Thus the Prophet ﷺ passed away from this mortal world. The news of the Prophet's death fell like a thunderbolt on his Companions and they all were stunned.

### **The Condition of Umar ﷺ**

Umar ﷺ was so terribly shocked that he temporarily lost his senses. He got up with his sword drawn and said at the top of his voice: "Some of the hypocrites have developed a notion that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has passed away. But, in fact, he has not died. He has rather gone to his Lord as Moses had done. He shall come back and cut their hands and legs." Umar ﷺ had gotten so emotional that nobody had the courage to ask him to sheathe his sword. After a short while Abu Bakr ﷺ arrived and went straight into the room. He took the head of the Prophet ﷺ in his hands, watched it and said, "May my mother and father be sacrificed for you, verily you have tasted the death which Allāh the Almighty had decreed for you, and never will you face any other death hereafter." He then came out saying *Inna lillāhi wa inna ilaihi raji'un* (to Allāh do we belong and to Him do we return) on his lips.

### **Firmness of Abu Bakr ﷺ**

Abu Bakr ﷺ asked Umar ﷺ to keep quiet but he paid no heed. He then stood at a short distance from him to address the people who now left Umar ﷺ to cluster round Abu Bakr ﷺ. He praised Allāh and then said: "O men, if anyone of you worships Muhammad ﷺ, let him know that Muhammad ﷺ is dead. But if anyone of you worships Allāh, then Allāh is alive and He does not die." Then continuing his speech he recited the Qur'ānic Verse:

"Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and indeed Messengers (the like of whom) have passed away before him. Will it be that, when he dies or is slain, you will turn back on your heels? He who turns back does no hurt to Allāh and Allāh will reward the thankful." (3:144)

All those who were present on that occasion felt pacified and their state of shock and bewilderment subsided quickly. Umar ؓ says: "At first I paid no heed to the call of Abu Bakr. But when he recited the Verse, it seemed as if it had just been revealed. I was taken aback and fell down as if I had no legs. I felt as if I had just then come to know of the Prophet's death."

### Hall of Banu Sâ'idah

Deliberations upon the new developments were going on when the news came that the *Ansâr* had collected in the hall of Banu Sâ'idah and were about to take the oath of allegiance at the hand of Sa'd bin Ubâdah ؓ. Some of them disputed the idea of choosing two leaders, one from the Quraish and another one from the *Ansâr*. Abu Bakr and Umar ؓ accompanied by a group of *Muhâjirin* got up without losing a moment and proceeded towards the trouble spot to put the matter right. However, Ali, Abbâs, Usâmah, and Fadl bin Abbâs ؓ the near relatives of the Prophet ﷺ were left behind to look after the burial affairs in conformity with the instructions of the Prophet ﷺ himself. Ali ؓ washed his body while Abbâs ؓ and his two sons helped moving him from one side to the other, while Usâmah ؓ was pouring water over the body.

### The Funeral Prayer and Burial

The task of washing the body being over, the Companions were divided over the place of burial. Abu Bakr ؓ then said, "I have heard from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ that every Prophet is being buried on the spot where he has breathed his last." The Prophet's bedding was accordingly removed from the place and a grave was dug for him at the same spot. The grave being completed, the people came to perform the funeral prayer in groups one after another. The women came in after the men and after them the children, all of whom prayed over him. Nobody acted as an *Imâm* for the funeral prayers of the Prophet ﷺ.

On receiving the sad news of the Prophet's illness and then of his final departure, Usâmah bin Zaid ؓ and his men moved back to Al-Madinah and the military standard was placed upright at the door of the Prophet's

room. The funeral prayer was performed in the room of Aishah ﷺ, where his burial was to take place. Obviously, it was impossible for the men, women and children of the entire city to perform the prayer together. Moreover, the prayer was not to be led by an *Imām*. Thus it was natural that all took some time in performing the prayers in separate small batches in the small room. The Prophet ﷺ passed away on Monday and was buried the next day, on Tuesday.

## **Noble Features**

The Prophet ﷺ was neither very tall nor short in stature. Among the people he appeared to rise higher than the others. His complexion was white and reddish, head large, beard full and thick, hair black and slightly curly and thick, sometimes touching his ear lobes and sometimes reaching down to his shoulders. His eyes round, wide, black, attractive, with red lines in the white parts and slanting thick brows parted in the middle. A vein protruded between the two eyebrows, which became more prominent in anger. His cheeks were even, soft and full. His teeth white and bright like pearls, and he would never burst into laughter he would simply smile. He was of a smiling countenance, soft-spoken, eloquent, and a man of all-round human qualities. The Seal of Prophethood was between the two shoulders. He used to do his work with his own hands

## **Children**

Apart from Ibrâhîm ﷺ, who was born to Maria Qibtiyah (Copt) ﷺ, all his children were born to his first wife Khadijah ﷺ. First of all she gave birth to his son Qâsim ﷺ who died in Makkah at the age of four years. It is after his name that the Prophet ﷺ came to be called Abul-Qâsim (father of Qâsim). Thereafter for the Prophet ﷺ she had Zainab ﷺ followed by Abdullâh ﷺ who was surnamed as *Taiyib* (pure) and *Tahir* (clean). She then gave birth to Ruqaiyah ﷺ, Umm Kulthum ﷺ and Fâtimah ﷺ in order. While all his sons died in infancy, all his daughters grew up to be married. But none except the youngest daughter Fâtimah ﷺ was blessed with progeny. She bore four children to Ali bin Abu Tâlib, Hasan, Husain, Zainab and Umm Kulthum ﷺ.



## Character and Features

### Various States and Conditions of the Prophet ﷺ:

The Prophet ﷺ had become an orphan in the womb of his mother and he began his life in hardships and difficulties. But when he departed from this mortal world, he had the whole of Arabia under his authority and none of the states of Arabia was beyond his control. But his simplicity, purity and uprightness served as a guiding light throughout his life.

Bukhari reports Aishah ؓ to have said, "The Prophet ﷺ never preferred himself to anyone in worldly affairs. He would do his household chores as you all do. He would milk the sheep and repair his shoes. When the construction work of the Prophet's Mosque was being done, the Prophet ﷺ also participated in the work like a common laborer carrying bricks for the mosque. He was one of the workers digging the trench, breaking stones and carrying clay in preparation for the Battle of the Confederates (also known as the Battle of the Trench). His common diet was barley bread of unsieved flour. But even the barley was sometimes not available for days at a time. Sometimes no fire was lighted in the hearth of his houses, and members of the Prophet's household had to live on dates and water. He never openly disliked any food nor criticized it. He would eat from whatever was served to him and held himself back when he wasn't hungry or when the food was disagreeable to him."

When Aishah ؓ was asked about his bedding she related, "It was made of coarse animal skin filled with date-bark." When the same question was repeated to Hafsa ؓ, she said, "It was just a piece of sackcloth. One night I folded it in four parts to make it more comfortable for the Prophet ﷺ. The next morning he asked as to what I had spread as the bedding. I told him that it was the same piece of sackcloth, but I had folded it in four parts to give him more comfort. The Prophet ﷺ asked me to make it as it was because it held him back from performing the night prayer."

The Prophet's coat of mail had been pawned with a Jew in return for 30 dirhams but he didn't have enough money to get it back from him.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ departed from the world and the coat of mail was still with the Jew. He left his weapons, a mule and a coat of mail as inheritance but with the instructions that these things were to be given in charity.

Are they not blind who accuse him of lifting his sword against his own people for (Allāh forbid) personal gain, sensual desire, for power, wealth or for fulfilling a lust for territorial gain?

Anas ؓ says, "I came to the Prophet ﷺ when I was only 8 years old and served the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ for 10 years. During such a long time he never uttered a painful word nor blamed me for doing anything wrong."

Abu Hurairah ؓ relates that once the people said to him, "Please invoke on the polytheists, the curse of Allāh." He replied, "I have not been sent to invoke the curse of Allāh; I have rather been sent by Allāh as mercy for mankind."

Āishah ؓ says, "His taste and temperament had nothing to do with nonsensical things." He would lift children in his lap to play with them, go to far off places to fulfill the needs of the sick. He would be the first to salute others and never pulled his hand back after a handshake before the other did. He would call his Companions with their surnames out of respect and addressed them with suitable and likeable names. He would never cut in while anybody was talking. However, he would forbid anyone from talking nonsense or he would get up to stop it.

### Cheerful and Perfect Manners:

Abdullah bin Hārith ؓ says, "I have never seen a person more cheerful than the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ." As per his saying, "The strong man is not one who knocks another down but the one who controls himself when his anger reaches its peak."

Anas ؓ said, "He was the bravest of all. Once the people of Al-Madinah found themselves in an unknown terror thinking it an invasion from the enemy. The people followed the commotion. But the panic-stricken people found to their utmost wonder that the Prophet ﷺ

was already returning from the center of the trouble riding bareback on a horse. He came across them on the way and pacified the people saying, "Don't worry; there is nothing to fear."

Barā' bin Āzib ؓ states, "The people fled the field on the day of Hunain, while the Prophet ﷺ was going forward reciting the martial lines: 'I am surely the Prophet, I am son of Abdul-Muttalib.' None was more valiant and courageous than he on that day. We took refuge behind him from forceful attacks. The one who could bear the charge of the enemy being beside the Prophet ﷺ on the battlefield was considered the bravest among us."

Anas ؓ relates, "Once I was walking with the Prophet ﷺ who was wearing a cloak with a coarse fringe, a bedouin met him and violently tugged his cloak. I saw that the man's tugging had left a mark on the neck and shoulder of Allāh's Prophet ﷺ. When the Prophet ﷺ turned towards him, the nomad said, "O Muhammad, give me two camels loaded with what Allāh has given you, for it neither belongs to you nor your father." The Prophet ﷺ kept silent out of his grace and politeness despite such rude and bitter words. Then speaking rather softly, he said to the nomad, "Should you be treated as you have treated me?" "No," the nomad said emphatically. "Why not?" The Prophet ﷺ asked. "It is because you don't believe in tit for tat," he very confidently replied. The Prophet ﷺ smiled at his plain talking and then ordered to load one of his camels with barley and another with dates."

Once Zaid bin Sa'nah, a Jew came to the Prophet ﷺ and demanded payment of the money owed by the Prophet ﷺ and addressed him rudely, saying, "You son of Abdul-Muttalib are late." Although the Prophet ﷺ kept smiling at his rudeness, Umar ؓ rebuked and reproached him. Thereupon the Prophet ﷺ said to Umar ؓ, "This man was entitled to better treatment from you. You ought to have advised me to repay the loan promptly and asked him to make his demand politely." At the same time he asked Umar ؓ to pay the loan and give Zaid twenty Sa' (60 kilograms) extra so as to compensate him for his threatening attitude towards Zaid. The gracious and obliging behavior of Allāh's Prophet ﷺ caused Zaid to embrace Islam then and there.

Anas ؓ relates, "I accompanied the Prophet ﷺ to Abu Saif, the smith whose wife would suckle his son, Ibrâhim ؓ, who was then on the brink of death. This sad plight brought tears to the eyes of the Prophet ﷺ. Thereupon Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf ؓ said, "Do you also show impatience, O Prophet of Allâh?" The Prophet ﷺ replied, "O Ibn Auf, these are the tears of mercy and affection, not of impatience and thanklessness. The heart saddens and the eyes shed tears, but we must not say anything that goes against the Will of Allâh."

Abu Khudri ؓ relates, "Once some people from the Ansâr asked for something from the Prophet ﷺ and he gave them. He gave all he had, when they repeated their demands, the Prophet ﷺ remarked, 'I never lay aside whatever comes to me. Verily, Allâh the Almighty saves those from the disgrace of asking for something who beg Allâh for it; Allâh makes rich those who long for it; Allâh makes them patient who keep patience; and none has ever been given a better gift from Allâh than patience'."

Abu Hurairah ؓ states, "The Prophet ﷺ has said more than once: 'If I had gold equal to Mount Uhud, I would feel happy only when I had distributed all of it before the end of three days. I keep nothing with me save what is necessary for the repayment of a loan'."

The Prophet ﷺ would rise to help the needy even when he had nothing to give. In such a situation he helped by borrowing from others, even when he already had loans of the same nature, otherwise he never borrowed anything from anybody for his own personal needs.

Jâbir bin Abdullah ؓ relates, "I accompanied the Prophet ﷺ on an expedition. My camel lagged behind because of exhaustion. After a short while the Prophet ﷺ passed by and asked, 'How are you Jâbir?' I told him, 'My camel is exhausted.' He hit my camel and it sped up. Then we moved ahead talking with each other. During this exchange he asked me, 'Will you sell the camel.' I replied in the affirmative. Thus he bought it from me and moved ahead. I reached the destination late in the day. I tied it to the door of the mosque. 'Leave it there and come in to perform two Rak'ah of prayer,' the Prophet ﷺ said to me. The prayer being over, he asked Bilâl ؓ to make payment

for the camel. When I moved a little with the amount, he called me back. I was afraid if the camel was to be returned. But on my return he said, 'Take the camel with you along with its price, which has already been paid to you'."

Once the Prophet ﷺ was passing through a grove along with a person. He cut two toothsticks one straight and another bent. He took the bent one and gave the straight one to his companion. Although he insisted on him (the Prophet ﷺ) to take the straight one, the Prophet ﷺ refused saying that everyone will on the Day of Judgment be asked about his etiquette with the company he has passed sometime with.

Ibn Abbâs ؓ relates that once some dispute arose between a hypocrite Muslim named Bishr and a Jew. Both of them came to the Prophet ﷺ for a verdict. After hearing both of them and looking into the matter, he gave his verdict in favor of the Jew. When they came out, Bishr said, "The verdict is not fair; let us go to Umar." Both of them went to him. The Jew stated before Umar ؓ: "Both of us have gone to the Prophet and he gave his verdict in my favor, but this man (Bishr) didn't accept it and has now brought me to you to seek and accept that of yours." Umar ؓ verified the statement of the Jew with Bishr who said, "This is a fact that we had gone to the Prophet for his verdict in the dispute but now I seek to prefer your verdict to that of his." Umar ؓ said, "Just wait, and I will give my verdict right away." He went into his house and came out with his sword and cut off the head of the hypocrite Bishr, and remarked, "Anyone who rejects the decision of Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ after claiming himself a Muslim, I decide his matter in this manner." Following this his hypocrite fellows raised much hue and cry against this action but Allâh the Almighty lent support to this decision of Umar ؓ through His Revelation, and it is said that from that day he came to be called 'Fâruq'.

After the conquest of Makkah, Fâtimah bint Al-Aswad of Banu Makhzum was apprehended on the charge of theft. The Prophet ﷺ ordered to cut off the right hand of the culprit after her crime was proved. The notables among the Quraish felt this was disgraceful. They wanted to save her from punishment by virtue of intercession, but none of them had the courage to go before the Prophet ﷺ with this

purpose in view. At last they approached Usamah bin Zaid رضي الله عنه to intercede with the Prophet ﷺ on the issue. When he brought the matter to the notice of Prophet ﷺ, his expression completely altered. He said, 'Usamah! Do you speak to me about the limits set by Allāh?' He got up then and addressed the people saying, "The people before you were destroyed because they used to overlook when a highborn or a man of substance among them committed a theft, but when the poor or the weak did the same, they chastised him as ordained by the law. I swear by Him Who holds my life, if Fātimah bint Muhammad had committed this theft, I would have amputated her hand."

### Informality:

Once the Prophet ﷺ said: "Keep away from praising me beyond a limit like the Christians who crossed all limits in adoring Isa bin Maryam. I am one of the slaves of Allāh, so call me Abdullah (the slave of Allāh)."

Once the Prophet ﷺ came out and all the Companions got up to pay their respect to him. Thereupon he said, "Do away with the practice of standing up to adore anyone like the *Ajami* people (non-Arabs)."

He would keep very close to his Companions and took his seat wherever he found a place. He took part in the work done by the servants and made them sit beside him.

He has said that one who endeavors to do the needful for the hungry and the poor, attains the status of one who fights in the way of Allāh, and one who prays the whole night and observes fast the whole year.

A certain person called on the Prophet ﷺ and asked, "O Prophet of Allāh, what is the way to *Jannah* (Paradise)?" He said, "Truth. It is because when a person is truthful, he adopts virtue, which leads to the light of Faith, and Faith leads him to *Jannah* (Paradise)." On another occasion he said, "Keep truthful even if your truth leads you to face death and destruction, for undoubtedly it is where salvation rests."

Once, on the way to Badr from Makkah, Akhnas bin Shuraiq said to Abu Jahl, "O Abul-Hakam, I ask you one thing, and none is here

except we two; tell me truthfully whether Muhammad is truthful or a liar." Abu Jahl replied, "By God, Muhammad always speaks the truth and he never uttered anything untrue."

Abu Saeed Khudri ؓ is reported to have said, "The Prophet ﷺ was more modest than a graceful and veiled virgin. We read from his face the sign of his displeasure. When he disliked anything, he would indicate it indirectly so that the person was not shamed. However, he made no concessions in matters of the Word of Allāh and the upholding of the Truth."

### **Moderation:**

Āishah ؓ related that when the Prophet ﷺ said anything of anyone, he never mentioned the person by name. He would rather say, "What type of person are those who do such things." Most of the time he kept silent and never talked unnecessarily; his speech was always clear and lucid, neither so long as to contain loose substance nor so short as to exclude some essential points. His movement was moderate, neither so slow as to become undesirable to others in his company nor so fast to cause exhaustion. In short, he practiced moderation in every aspect of life.

### **Cheerful Disposition:**

He radiated cheerfulness. Once he promised to give someone a camel. When that person asked for it, he ﷺ said, "I can give you the calf of a she camel." "What shall I do with the calf?" the person said with a touch of disappointment. Thereupon he ﷺ said, "If a camel is not the calf of a she-camel, whose calf is it?" But the Prophet ﷺ never uttered a word of untruth even during casual talk.

### **Laudable Traits of Character:**

When the Prophet ﷺ was in the company of his Companions, he was so close to them that a newcomer wouldn't recognize him distinctly and would ask for the Prophet ﷺ to be pointed out to him. He did not like to eat anything that might cause a bad smell to emit from his mouth. He wore clothes with patches; he liked simple but clean

garments. He used a toothstick several times a day. The people sitting beside him never complained of his body, clothes or mouth emitting a bad smell. He sought forgiveness between parties where it could be helpful in bringing about reforms, but in case of crimes demanding punishment, he never held himself back, because refraining from chastising the criminals was to him tantamount to aiding and abetting in promoting crimes.

Charities from Muslims were not limited to the Muslims, he extended it to the Christians, Jews and polytheists too. He put up with exemplary ease whatever calamities befell him but he became restless to find anybody else in trouble. He applied all sources and resources in accomplishing any job but left the outcome to Allâh the Almighty, and he was least afraid of the result going against his hope. He showed humility but not meanness; he was awesome but not rude and rash; he practiced generosity but not extravagance; whoever came before him, all of a sudden felt awe-stricken but when seated beside him, began to love him. He asked to keep away from epidemics, forbade quacks to treat patients and disliked the use of prohibited things as medicine. Whenever he had two ways to do a thing, he used the easier one. He served the prisoners of war like his guests. He took part in manly sports and exercises like archery, shooting, and horse racing along with his Companions.



## The Rightly-Guided Caliphate

### Caliph and Caliphate

Caliph means successor and caliphate means the succession of rule, and in historian's terminology, caliph approximates the words king, monarch or ruler. It is not at all necessary that before dealing with the events of Abu Bakr's caliphate after the Prophet ﷺ, a historian should devote his time and space in discussing the word caliph or caliphate. But since the succession of Prophet ﷺ has taken the form of an ethical issue between two sections, the task of a historian has become rather difficult. Moreover, it has also become incumbent on the historians to put forward their own point of view and belief concerning the caliphate before embarking upon the topic of the Rightly-Guided Caliphate.

Wherever the word *Khalifah* (caliph) appears in the Qur'ān, it is immediately followed by the word *Al-Ard* (earth). Moreover it is proved beyond doubt from the Verse:

"I am going to place generation after generation on earth." (2:30)

Allāh the Almighty has appointed Adam and the children of Adam, as His caliph on earth. It is also abundantly clear that the children of Adam are the most eminent of all created beings and their being

rulers on earth is beyond doubt. The caliphate of men on earth is certainly a Divine caliphate and man is the caliph of Allāh. Allāh the Exalted is far above any creature including the most eminent of the created beings that becomes His vice-regent on earth. So, man can be nothing more than the apparent ruler of the earth and makes all other creatures obey His rule. It is clear now that in Verse 2:30. The word caliph stands for 'generation after generation' or 'ruler' and for nothing else. The Qur'ān says at another place:

"He it is Who has made you successors on the earth, and He has raised you in ranks, some above others." (6:165)

Here caliphate stands for something specific, your people have been made ruler, and all other people are to be ruled by you. Here also the word 'caliph' makes its appearance, which gives the meaning of nothing but a 'ruler'. Again, it has been mentioned in another Verse:

"O Dāwud! Verily, we have placed you as a successor on earth." (38:26)

Here also, the rule or empire of a person, Dāwud عليه السلام, finds mention and the word caliph signifies a king, monarch or ruler. About the same rule of Dāwud عليه السلام, it has been said at another place:

"We made his kingdom strong." (38:20)

Regarding the Muslims and particularly about the Companions it has been said:

"Allāh has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds that He will certainly grant them succession in the earth as He granted it to those before them." (24:55)

It means: As We have installed others as rulers in the past, so also those among the followers of the Prophet ﷺ, who believed and performed good deeds, will be conferred upon the rule on earth.

### **Claim to Caliphate**

From the Qur'ān it becomes clear beyond doubt that rule or caliphate on earth is from Allāh and He Alone can take it back.

It is said:

"O Allāh! Possessor of the kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom You will, and You take the kingdom from whom You will." (3:26)

Now it is to be seen as to who really deserves the caliphate or rule, and what are the distinctive signs of those who are given caliphate. According to the Qur'ān, it is knowledge on which the rule over mankind is based.

"And He taught Adam all the names (of everything)." (2:31)

While the angels considered the traits of corruption and disruption against a righteous caliphate, and the mention and glorification of Allāh the Almighty to be the consideration for making one deserve the caliphate. We have seen clearly that human beings established their rule over other creatures due to their power of knowledge only. Had man not been adorned and strengthened with deep and wide knowledge, even a gust of wind, a wave of water, a leaf of some tree or a particle of dust could have rendered him helpless. It is by virtue of his knowledge that even a lion, an elephant, river, mountain, wind, fire, and lightening are at his service and are ready to obey him and comfort him like his servants. The Qur'ān informs us when there were objections to the kingship of Tālūt (Saul), Allāh the Almighty answered the detractors through His Prophet:

"Verily Allāh has chosen him above you and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and stature. And Allāh grants His kingdom to whom He wills." (2:247)

Having conferred rule and caliphate on Dāwud ؑ, Allāh the Almighty commanded

"So judge you between men in truth and follow not your desire." (38:26)

In another Verse, He said:

"And indeed We destroyed generations before you when they did wrong, while their Messengers came to them with clear proofs, but they were not such as to believe! That do We requite the people who are sinners. Then We made you successors after

them, generations after generations in the land that We might see how you would work." (10:13,14)

Hundreds of Verses from the Qur'ân may be produced to establish that caliph stands for 'ruler' and caliphate for 'rule'. And in order to rule establishing knowledge, justice, reform, power and welfare of mankind are some of the prerequisite conditions, which have always been required from a king or ruler without which he cannot keep his rule intact. All these good qualities can only be obtained through the teachings of the Prophets and the Messengers of Allâh. However, it is also necessary that a Prophet has to be a ruler in order to set the example. Had mere prayers and glorification of Allâh the Almighty been enough, only Prophets or angels would have ruled the world. In short, the caliphate is another name for the rule which Allâh the Almighty confers on those He wants. However, when a ruling nation indulges in corruption and wrongdoing, Allâh the Almighty takes it away from them.

### **Islamic Caliphate**

All the progress made by mankind so far along with all his academic and moral virtues are the outcome of the teachings of the Prophets. Prophets have sometimes come as teachers, for instance, like Isa ﷺ (Jesus Christ), and at times as monarchs like Dâwud (David) ﷺ. The religious codes brought by monarch-Prophets are more perfect and magnificent than those of the teacher-Prophets. The teacher-Prophets set examples for every member of their *Ummah* (community) while the monarch-Prophets not only set examples but have the power to enforce codes and make the people follow them. When the teacher-Prophet departs from the world after finishing his task, none can succeed him in matters of Prophethood, for the Prophet receives Revelation from Allâh the Almighty to convey to his people.

Now as a matter of general principle, the successor of a Prophet must be a Prophet. But since a Prophet departs from the world only after completing the task assigned to him, he needs no successor after him. This is why no teacher-Prophet has ever had a successor. However, as far as a monarch-Prophet is concerned, nobody can succeed him as a Prophet but his rule may be succeeded by anybody as a successor. Since

the successor would have been brought up under the shadow of the Prophet's teachings, he is supposed to be the most suitable person to do the job. Since Muhammad ﷺ was the perfect and the last Prophet and had been sent with the complete guidelines, he was, therefore, a ruling-Prophet and his rule is the best and most perfect example for rulers and leaders to the Day of Judgment.

He was essentially supposed to have a successor or caliph after him, and there actually have been many who have succeeded him in temporal affairs. In addition, there were those among them who were brought up in the mould of the Prophet ﷺ and had the stamp of Prophetic character and adopted the pattern of his Prophetic rule. Their rule came to be called the Rightly-Guided Caliphate. But the farther they happened to be from the days of Prophetic rule, their caliphate showed a difference from that of the primary example.

### **Objection to the Procedure of electing a Caliph**

After the time of the Prophet ﷺ, some people among the Muslims raised doubts of a ridiculous nature regarding the procedure adopted for electing a caliph. But, in truth, all such charges are false and fabricated for the choice of a ruler or caliph rests wholly and solely with Allāh the Almighty. He Alone gives it to someone and takes it away from others. He never left this job to any human.

The Qur'ān delineates the task of a caliph and its dos and don'ts. It gives detailed guidance about the prayer, fasting, *Hajj*, *Zakāt*, the rights of Allāh and His servants but doesn't mention the succession of the Prophet. This is because He gives it to the one He chooses for the job and makes arrangements for this. Allāh the Almighty Alone knows who deserves the job. The one who succeeded the first caliph was the one whom Allāh chose for the job. If any other person is brought forward as the most deserving for the post, in fact, it is to say that Allāh the Almighty failed to bring a man of His choice for the post. It means He (Allāh forbid) was defeated in His Plan.

Thus to raise a dispute in this matter is tantamount to objecting to the choice of the Almighty. Thus, the detractors of Abu Bakr's caliphate are like those who object to the decision of a judge in a court of law,

the judge cannot alter his judgment because of their deprecation. Now if anybody disapproves of the caliphate of a person, in fact, he stands against the judgment of Allāh the Exalted and Most High.

### **Difference between Caliphate and Temporal Rule**

The above discussion may create misunderstanding that if the caliphate is simply like temporal rule then any king may be called a caliph and caliphate has nothing to do with religion. But, let it be known that in Islam the caliph is strictly one who patterns his rule according to the rule established by the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ and only such a ruler may be included among the successors of the Messengers.

The first and foremost duty of the successor of the Prophet ﷺ as a ruler is to establish a rule according to the Divine code and enforce it. Such a ruler alone can serve humanity in the best possible way observing the laws and tenets of Islam.

Thus to say that the caliphate has nothing to do with Islam is something nonsensical. A despotic ruler can never bring peace and welfare to mankind. The rule established by the righteous caliphs was based on the example set by the Prophet ﷺ himself. And before or after that no rule was similar to that which was set up by the Prophet ﷺ. This rule was called the Rightly-Guided Caliphate. Ever since that system of governance, Islamic rule has been continuing but the set up has kept changing with the passage of time.

### **Relation of Caliphate with a Nation, Tribe or Family**

The Qur'ān clearly and unequivocally says:

“O people: We created you of a single man and woman and made of you separate families and tribes to know each distinctively from others. To Allāh the most honorable is the one who is most God-fearing; Allāh is All-Knowing and Aware.” (49:13)

Islam has tried to carve out one nation by doing away with family pride, national superiority and vanity.

“The believers are nothing else than brothers.” (49:10)

He has made one brotherhood of all brotherhoods and one nation of all nations and gave its name as Muslim or *Momin* (believers). Families and nations of the entire world may be divided in two categories following the teachings of Islam; believers or Muslims and disbelievers or polytheists. After making entry into the realm of *Tauhid* (Oneness of Allāh), all such differences of nations and tribes are a mere source of recognizing clearly one from another. Thus the pious and righteous alone deserve honor and power whichever nation or tribe they belong to.

In each case, piety and faith lie at the base. For wielding power, Allāh the Almighty has put knowledge, health, physical strength, piety, justice and reform as prerequisite conditions but no particular nation or tribe finds a place in such a list. Islam made a high-ranking man of the Quraish to become the victim of the youngsters of Al-Madinah, and made Bilāl ؓ, the Abyssinian slave, superior to the nobles of Arabia. Usamah bin Zaid ؓ became the commander of an army with both Abu Bakr and Umar ؓ under his command. Islam made the king and the slave stand side by side with the same rank.

Islam made the Prophet ﷺ to declare that if Fatimah ؓ, his own daughter committed theft, her hand would be amputated like any other person committing the same crime. Islam made the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ to announce: "O people! If an ordinary Abyssinian slave is made your ruler or caliph, you must obey him." It was Islam, which made Umar ؓ to say in the last moments of his life, "Had Sâlim, the slave of Abu Hudhaifah been alive, I would have appointed him my successor." In short, Islam broke to pieces the idols of family and hereditary arrogance. It was a unique, exclusive and spectacular service that Islam rendered to the world of humanity. Islam has a right to take pride in that no other religion or set of laws was ever able to cause the idol of hereditary arrogance to shake even a little, while Islam pulled it down.

How strange that even the Muslims following the tenets of Islam are found saying that the Prophet ﷺ had made caliphate the special privilege of the Quraish tribes or Banu Hâshim or Ali ؓ or his progeny and deprived all others of this right. Had it been so, the Qur'ân would have expounded it in unequivocal terms and the

Prophet of Allāh ﷺ would have defined it in clear words. If a particular section claims that Allāh the Almighty had sent down any orders regarding the rule or caliphate which were cleverly concealed by the usurpers of the caliphate, then, Allāh's Claim of preserving the Qur'ān would be rendered 'false' as He has said:

"Verily, We it is Who have sent down the Qur'ān and surely, We will guard it (from corruption)." (15:9)

Moreover, His Messenger ﷺ would have failed in his duty of conveying the Message of Allāh fully and adequately, although he declared before a huge congregation of one hundred thousand people that he had completed the task of his preaching and asked the people to testify to it. Furthermore, he counseled his people concerning very small details from his deathbed but told them nothing about his successor.

It is because he knew very well that the act of choosing a ruler or caliph rested exclusively with Allāh and He did not entrust this duty to the Prophet ﷺ. However, inspiration from Allāh the Almighty had already let him know who was going to succeed him as caliph. Therefore, he asked Abu Bakr ؓ to lead the Muslims in prayers during his illness. He had also counseled the *Muhājirin* to take care of the *Ansār* for he, perhaps, knew that the caliphate was to be entrusted to the *Muhājirin*. From the knowledge gained from Allāh, he had already disclosed that *Imām* will come from the Quraish. But all these were among his prophecies, not his orders. The Quraish were chosen for shouldering the heavy but very delicate burden of the caliphate because they had a very profound knowledge of the workings of Islam and they were ahead of all in observing piety. However, the caliphate or rule is not particular to any certain race, tribe or family. It is the reward of Allāh for the deserving. When a ruling class or family loses its integrity and capability, Allāh the Almighty brings someone else to replace it. And this is the demand of justice.

### **The Caliphate and Spiritual Guidance as a Profession**

Some people are of the opinion that the caliphate referred to in *Sūrat An-Nur* deals with the system of spiritual guidance as a profession. To



me it is an utterly wrong belief. Although a spiritual guide rules over his disciples, he has no power to enforce the Islamic code and Divine order. The Qur'ân has left nothing to guesswork by referring in clear terms to the caliphates of Adam and Dâwud. We are ordained to follow the Qur'ân in all walks of life.

## **Abu Bakr Siddiq** ﷺ

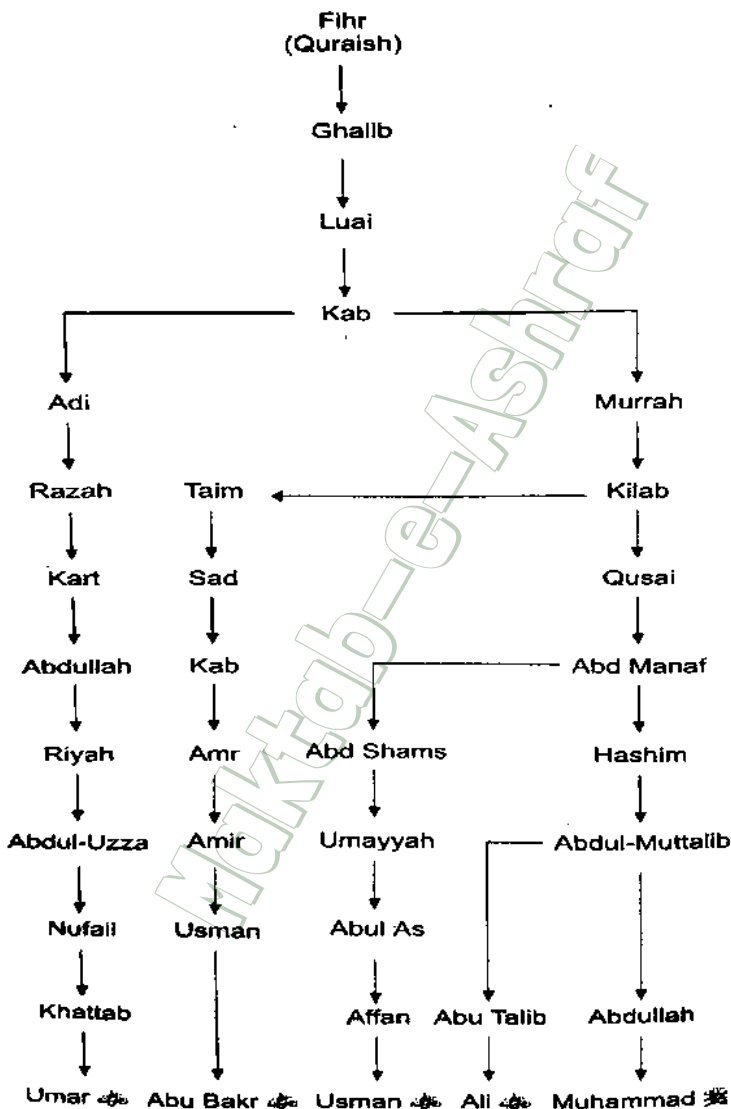
### **His Name and Genealogy:**

His family lineage is Abdullah bin Abu Quhâfah bin Âmir bin Amr bin Ka'b bin Sa'd bin Tamim bin Murrah bin Ka'b bin Luai bin Ghâlib bin Fihir bin Mâlik bin Nadr bin Kinânah. Murrah serves as the meeting ground for the lineage of the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ﷺ, and both of them have a distance of 6 generations.

His mother was Salma bint Sakhr bin Ka'b bin Sa'd. She was the cousin of Abu Quhâfah and was widely known as Umm-ul-Khair. The name of his father, Abu Quhâfah was Uthmân. Abu Bakr ﷺ was called Abd Ka'bah in the Days of Ignorance. The Prophet ﷺ named him Abdullah, and his name was Atiq also. However, Jalâluddin Suyuti writes in his book *Târikh Al Khulafa*: "The majority of Ulama' (religious scholars) is of the opinion that Atiq was his surname, not his name." To some, he was called Atiq because of his being handsome and graceful while others argue that since his genealogy was spotless, he was known as Atiq.

There is a complete consensus among the true followers of Islam that his surname was Siddiq, for he testified to the Prophethood without any hesitation and fear and took it upon himself to follow the truth. When the event of *Mi'raj* (Ascension) occurred, he showed his unshakable firmness and conviction to lend his support to it and did it in the face of all opposition. He was younger than the Prophet ﷺ by two years and two months. He was born and brought up in Makkah. He would go on journeys with trade caravans. He migrated to Al-Madinah along with the Prophet ﷺ and embraced death in the same city.

## Relationship of Muhammad ﷺ with the Four Caliphs



## Age of Ignorance:

During the Age of Ignorance, the power and nobility of the Quraish were shared by ten clans: (1) Hāshim, (2) Umayyah, (3) Naufal, (4) Abdud-Dār, (5) Asad (6) Taim, (7) Makhzum, (8) Adi, (9) Jumh and (10) Sahm. These clans were entrusted with different jobs to do. Banu Hāshim had it as their right to provide water to the pilgrims. Banu Naufal had the right to give provisions to those who happened to be in need of it. Banu Abdud-Dār had the key of the Ka'bah along with guarding it. Banu Asad had to give counsel and maintain Dar An-Nadwah (the House of Assembly). Banu Taim decided about blood money and penalties. Banu Adi had intertribal ambassadorship responsibilities, Banu Jumh had the arrows of omen and Banu Sahm managed offerings to idols.

Abu Bakr ﷺ would give his judgment about blood money and penalties on behalf of Banu Taim and the entire Quraish had to abide by his decision. Besides, Abu Bakr ﷺ was the chief of his clan and wielded deep influence as a man of substance. Among the Quraish, he commanded distinction for his wide responsibilities and for entertaining guests on a large scale. They took his counsel in their important affairs and he was regarded highly for his prudence, patience and firmness. He was well-versed in the art of genealogy. He naturally kept away from evil and depravity. When asked if he had ever drunk wine, he curtly replied, "Allāh forbid, never!" "Why not?" the person asked. "I hated that my body would emit foul smells and happen the loss of good manners." When the matter was stated in the presence of the Prophet ﷺ, he said twice, "Abu Bakr is true."

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ was the embodiment of good and was spotless, just and righteous. It is because of this that when the Prophet ﷺ invited him to accept Islam, he embraced it without delay and promised to lend all help and total support, which he fulfilled in the face of all opposition and extreme hardship and misery. The Prophet ﷺ once said, "The sun never rose over anyone better than Abu Bakr except the Prophets." Since he attributed such great respect, many including Uthmān bin Affān, Talhah bin Ubaidullah and Sa'd bin Abu Waqqās ﷺ accepted Islam under his direct influence.

## Islamic Era:

Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ was the first to believe in the Prophet ﷺ and was the first to perform prayers led by the Prophet ﷺ. Somebody asked Maimun bin Mehrān, "Who is better in your opinion, Abu Bakr or Ali?" He became angry and very indignantly uttered, "I never knew that I would remain alive until the day these two would be compared with each other. They were, in fact, like the head of Islam. Abu Bakr was the first to accept Islam among the adults, Ali among the boys and Khadijah among the women."

The religious scholars are unanimous that Abu Bakr ؓ never left the company of the Prophet ﷺ without his permission. He migrated for the sake of his love for Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ leaving his wife and children alone and stayed with the Prophet ﷺ in the cave and accompanied him in every battle. In the battle of Badr, the Prophet ﷺ said about Abu Bakr and Ali ؓ, "One has Jibril (Gabriel) and another Mikā'il (Michael) with them." In the battle of Badr, his son Abdur-Rahmān bin Abu Bakr had joined the polytheist army. Once after accepting Islam, he said to his father, "Several times on the day of Badr you came within the range of my arrows but I held my hand back." Thereupon Abu Bakr ؓ replied, "If I had to face you, I would have made you the target of my arrow."

## Valor:

Once Ali ؓ put the question, "Who is the most valiant person to you?" "You are the most valiant," they replied with one voice. "I always take on my equals; this is not bravery," Ali ؓ replied and said again, "Tell me the name of the most valiant person." "We don't know," all of them replied. "Abu Bakr is the most valiant," Ali ؓ replied and added, "On the day of Badr we had erected a hut for the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. We then asked each other as to who will accompany the Prophet ﷺ to save him from the onslaught of the polytheists. By Allāh none of us had the courage to offer his services. But Abu Bakr stood alone drawing his sword and allowed no one to draw near the Prophet ﷺ, and whoever attempted an attack on the Prophet ﷺ, came under the charge of Abu Bakr. The polytheists of

Makkah once surrounded the Prophet ﷺ saying, 'It is you alone who says God is One. No one else has ever said so.' They were dragging him when Abu Bakr stepped forward and set about beating and moving them and saying, 'Woe to you, you want to kill a person who simply says: my God is One.' Saying this, Ali ؓ burst into tears and further said, "Tell me whether the believing men of Âl-Firaun (family of Pharaoh) are better or Abu Bakr?" When the people made no answer, he himself said, "Why don't you reply? By Allâh, a moment of Abu Bakr is far better than a thousand moments of those people, for they kept their Faith concealed and Abu Bakr brought his Faith to the fore."

### Generosity:

He was the most generous among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. It was about him that the following Verses were sent down:

"The pious will be far removed from it (Hell). He who spends his wealth for increase in self-purification." (92:17, 18)

The Prophet of Allâh ﷺ said, "The wealth of Abu Bakr proved more useful to me than the wealth of anybody else." Having heard this, Abu Bakr ؓ burst into tears and said, "What is the worth of my wealth, it is all because of you."

As per one *Hadith*, the Prophet ﷺ spent from the wealth of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ as he did from his own. The day Abu Bakr ؓ accepted Islam, he possessed forty thousand dirhams, and he spent this all on the Prophet ﷺ.

One day Umar ؓ said referring to the expedition of Tabuk, "When the Prophet ﷺ urged upon his Companions to donate to the war fund, I resolved to surpass Abu Bakr in the matter of contribution and I gave away half of my wealth and property in the way of Allâh. The Prophet ﷺ inquired of me, 'What have you left for the children?' I submitted 'The remaining half.' In the meantime, Abu Bakr came in with his entire wealth and property and the Prophet ﷺ put to him the same question. He replied, 'Allâh and His Messenger are enough for the children.' Having seen and heard this, I said to myself that I would never be able to surpass Abu Bakr in anything."

Abu Hurairah ؓ relates that the Prophet ﷺ once said, "I have done a good turn in return for everyone's favor but the obligation of Abu Bakr still rests on my shoulders and Allāh the Almighty will, on the Day of Judgment, compensate for it. The wealth and property of none benefited me so much as did that of Abu Bakr."

### Knowledge and Excellences:

Among the Companions, he was the most learned and wise. Whenever some difference of opinion arose among the Companions, the issue was put before Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ. His ruling was considered as final. He had knowledge of the Qur'ān more than all others, and so the Prophet ﷺ asked him to lead the Muslims in prayers. He also had perfect knowledge of the *Sunnah* and the Companions turned to him for his opinion.

His memory was also very strong and he happened to be very sagacious. He enjoyed the sacred company of the Prophet ﷺ right from the beginning of his Prophethood until his final departure. During his caliphate whenever an issue came up, he turned to the Qur'ān for the solution. If he failed to find it in the Qur'ān, he gave his verdict according to the sayings and doings of the Prophet ﷺ. If any such saying or doing was not known, he would ask the Companions if anyone of them knew any *Hadith* concerning the issue. If nothing was known about the issue in question, he called a meeting of the illustrious Companions and took a decision according to the opinion of the majority.

Abu Bakr ؓ was the greatest genealogist of the Quraish and one of the greatest in the whole of Arabia. Even Jubair bin Mut'im ؓ, one of the most noted genealogists of Arabia, learned it from Abu Bakr ؓ. He was also an eminent interpreter of dreams and he interpreted dreams even during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. He was also the most eloquent speaker among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Scholars are agreed that Abu Bakr and Ali ؓ were the most eloquent.

Ali ؓ has said more than once that Abu Bakr ؓ was the most excellent among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Ali ؓ once said, "I shall beat the person who holds me superior to Abu Bakr and

Umar." Ali ؓ relates that the Prophet ﷺ said, "May Allāh show mercy to Abu Bakr, he gave his daughter to me in marriage, escorted me to Al-Madinah and gave Bilāl freedom from slavery. May Allāh show mercy to Umar for he speaks the truth no matter how bitter it might be; may Allāh show mercy to Uthmān for even angels observe modesty before him; may Allāh show mercy to Ali and keep truth along with him wherever he may be."

Imam Shāfi'ī says, "Siddiq was unanimously chosen as caliph for a better man was not available on earth." Mu'āwiyah bin Qurrah ؓ opines: "The Companions never expressed any doubt regarding the caliphate of Abu Bakr and they always addressed him as the caliph of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, and the Companions can never reach a consensus on a misdeed."

### Beautiful Living:

Ata' bin Sā'ib ؓ states: "The day after the oath of allegiance (*Bai'ah*), Abu Bakr ؓ was seen going to the market with two sheets. 'Where are you going?' Umar ؓ inquired of him. 'To the market,' he replied. 'You should leave this business for you have now become the Leader of the believers,' Umar ؓ argued. 'From where will my wife and children and myself eat?' Abu Bakr ؓ asked. 'Leave it to Abu Ubaidah ؓ,' Umar ؓ said. Following this, both of them called on Abu Ubaidah ؓ. Abu Bakr ؓ said to him, 'Collect from the *Muhājirin* a maintenance allowance for me and my wife and children. Everything should be very ordinary. Garments for summer and winter will be needed and they are to be returned when worn out before the demand for new ones are made'."

Abu Bakr bin Hafs ؓ states that Abu Bakr ؓ said to Āishah ؓ before his death, "I was only benefited from the service done to the Muslims by eating and wearing whatever rough and coarse clothes were available. I have nothing of the public funds with me except a slave, a dromedary and an old sheet. Send all of these to Umar when I am no more."

Hasan bin Ali ؓ relates that on the eve of his death, Abu Bakr ؓ said to Āishah Siddiqah ؓ, "After my death you will send to Umar

this she-camel whose milk we drank, this big bowl I ate from and these sheets. I had taken these articles from the *Bait-ul-Mâl* (public funds) in my capacity as the caliph." When these things reached Umar ؓ he remarked, "May Allâh show mercy on Abu Bakr, how terribly he suffered for us." Abu Bakr ؓ never kept wealth and goods deposited with the *Bait-ul-Mâl*. He spent on the Muslims whatever came to the public treasury. At times he purchased horses and weapons to be given in the way of Allâh and sometimes he bought clothes for the poor and the bedouins. When Umar ؓ, along with some Companions, examined the *Bait-ul-Mâl* after Abu Bakr's death, it was empty. The little girls of the locality would come to him with their goat to be milked and he would do it for them. Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ used to sit among people in a manner that nobody could recognize who was the caliph.

### Important Events of the Siddiqi Caliphate

#### Hall of Banu Sâ'idah and the Pledge of Caliphate

When Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ came to know of the congregation of the *Ansâr* in the Hall of Banu Sâ'idah to choose an *Amir* (Chief) from the *Ansâr*, he hurried to the spot accompanied by Umar ؓ. It was a crucial moment in Islamic history. A little delay or neglect might have disrupted the unity between the *Muhâjirin* and the *Ansâr* causing the Muslims immense harm. But since Allâh the Almighty had decided otherwise, He infused in Abu Bakr ؓ the courage and determination necessary to face the troubled situation and by his wisdom the situation was resolved. The Prophet of Allâh ﷺ had unified the Muslims in a manner that the idols of tribal and national arrogance and discrimination had been broken to pieces. Abu Bakr ؓ saved the situation and stopped the trouble in its beginning.

Although the number of the *Muhâjirin* in Al-Madinah was less than the *Ansâr*, the *Ansâr* were divided in two large sections, the *Aus* and the *Khazraj*, who had been rivals from the pre-Islamic days. Thus the Muslims of Al-Madinah could possibly be divided along their old tribal lines into three large sections, the third being the *Muhâjirin* or the people of Quraish.



### **Bal'ah (Pledge)**

Shortly after the demise of the Prophet ﷺ, all the *Muhājirīn* assembled in the Prophet's Mosque because the majority of the *Muhājirīn* lived in the vicinity of the Mosque while the *Ansār* were much less in number. Another Muslim gathering in Saqifah Banu Sā'idah consisted of the *Ansār* and a *Muhājir* or two. With Islam still in its beginning, its growth, the hostile endeavors of its opponents, turbulence and turmoil created by battles and expeditions, the extermination of polytheism and the Muslims bowing their will before the Islamic codes made it tremendously important for the Muslims as a whole to choose for themselves an *Amir* without any delay.

The loving sentiments of Umar ؓ gave the people no opportunity to think over the issue of the caliphate. Had Abu Bakr ؓ not hurried to the spot on hearing the terrible news of the Prophet's demise, nobody can say how long the people in the Prophet's Mosque would have been in the grip of that distressing situation. The congregation held at the sitting place of Sa'd bin Ubādah ؓ was different. They were comparatively peaceful and were seriously deliberating the issue of choosing a successor of the Prophet ﷺ in temporal affairs. This congregation belonged to the *Ansār* and was held at the place of Sa'd bin Ubādah ؓ who was the chief of the Khazraj. This section of the *Ansār* were superior to the Aus in number and wealth, it was only natural that the majority of them would be in favor of the Khazraj chief.

Although the *Muhājirīn* numbered less in Al-Madinah, they were so influential and in command of the affairs that an *Ansāri* got up to say how could the *Muhājirīn* be forced to accept a caliph from the *Ansār*. Another *Ansāri* rose to suggest that a caliph from *Muhājirīn* and another from the *Ansār* was the best and the most reasonable solution. "But it will be a show of weakness on our part," Sa'd bin Ubādah ؓ said objecting to the dual system. In response to this plea, an *Ansār* rose to say, "In case they reject our caliph, we shall drive them out from Al-Madinah at the point of our swords." However, the few *Muhājirīn* in the assembly protested against this attitude and this led to a dispute and disorder of a serious nature and a fight between the *Muhājirīn* and the *Ansār* seemed possible.

When the situation took this ugly turn, Mughirah bin Shu'bah ﷺ left the trouble spot and came to the Prophet's Mosque to relate what was going on in Saqifah Banu Sâ'idah. The situation on this side was that Abu Bakr ﷺ had just finished his speech and was now engaged in making arrangements for the burial. But on hearing this awful news he left everything to go to the *Ansâr* and bring the situation under control.

He took with him Umar and Abu Ubaidah ﷺ and left Ali ﷺ and others to make arrangements for the burial of the Prophet ﷺ. In a situation packed with confusion, disorder, anger and emotion only a man like Abu Bakr ﷺ could do what was necessary. When Umar ﷺ made an attempt to say something, Abu Bakr ﷺ put a check on him for he knew that an emotionally charged Umar ﷺ could mishandle the already deteriorating situation.

Abu Bakr ﷺ himself rose to speak and said in a tone filled with confidence and firmness, "The first among the chiefs will be from the *Muhâjirin*, and the *Ansâr* will be their advisors." Thereupon Hubâb bin Al-Mundhir ﷺ said, "It seems reasonable that there should be one *Amir* (chief) from us and another from you." Umar ﷺ replied, "You remember very well that the Prophet ﷺ had exhorted the *Muhâjirin* to take care of the *Ansâr* and did not ask the *Ansâr* to make concessions to the *Muhâjirin*. This will of the Prophet ﷺ goes in favor of the *Muhâjirin* to be at the helm of affairs."

Hubâb bin Al-Mundhir ﷺ tried to answer back but Abu Ubaidah ﷺ pacified both of them. Meanwhile Bashir bin An-Numân bin Ka'b Ansâri ﷺ got up and expressed his feeling, "The Prophet ﷺ most certainly belonged to the Quraish tribe so the people of the Quraish alone deserve the caliphate. We, no doubt, lent our help and support to Islam, but our efforts were meant solely for seeking the Pleasure of Allâh, and we don't want its compensation in this world nor do we want to pick a quarrel with the *Muhâjirin*."

Following this, Hubâb bin Al-Mundhir ﷺ said, "You have showed utmost timidity and undid our position as a whole." Bashir ﷺ replied, "I have not showed any timidity and I have preferred not to bicker over the caliphate with the people who really deserve it. Have

you not heard O Hubâb that the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ had said, 'Imams will come from the Quraish.'?" These utterances of Bashir ؓ received support from some other *Ansâr* too. Hubâb bin Al-Mundhir ؓ also kept silent and changed his opinion. In this way the religious and spiritual considerations prevailed over the material and temporal ones.

Now the entire congregation plunged in deep silence and the growing conflict between the *Muhâjirin* and the *Ansâr* over the issue of the caliphate disappeared. In this state of perfect peace, Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ said, "Umar and Abu Ubaydah are here, choose anyone of them." Umar ؓ said, "No, Abu Bakr is the most excellent among the *Muhâjirin*. He has been the Companion of the Prophet ﷺ in the cave; the Prophet ﷺ asked him to officiate in leading the Muslims in prayers, and prayer is the most superior of all other Articles of Faith. Therefore, none is entitled to assume the duties of the caliphate in the presence of Abu Bakr." Saying this Umar ؓ stretched his hand first of all to take *Bai'ah* (oath of allegiance) at the hand of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ followed by Abu Ubaidah and Bashir bin Sa'd Ansâri ؓ. After that the people on all sides of Abu Bakr ؓ came to take *Bai'ah*. As the news spread, all the believers rushed to pledge their allegiance to the caliph.

Sa'd bin Ubâdah ؓ from the *Ansâr* and those from the *Muhâjirin* who were engaged in making arrangements for the burial, did not take the *Bai'ah* in Saqifah Banu Sâ'idah. However, Sa'd ؓ took the *Bai'ah* with Abu Bakr ؓ later the same day. Ali, Zubair and Talhah ؓ didn't take *Bai'ah* for 40 days or according to some narratives for six months with the complaint that they were not included in the consultations that were held at Saqifah Banu Sâ'idah concerning the *Bai'ah*.

One day Ali ؓ came to Abu Bakr ؓ and said, "I don't refuse to admit that your virtues entitle you to the caliphate. My sole complaint is that we are the close relatives of the Prophet ﷺ, why did you then take *Bai'ah* at Saqifah Banu Sâ'idah without consulting us. Had you called us there, we would have taken *Bai'ah* at your hand ahead of everyone." Abu Bakr ؓ said in reply, "To treat the relatives of the Prophet ﷺ well is dearer and more desirable to me than to do so for my own relatives. I went to Saqifah Banu Sâ'idah not for the taking of

*Bai'ah* but for putting an end to the dispute arising between the *Muhājirin* and the *Anṣār*, which had caused a difficult situation. I did not seek their support, they rather took their oath of allegiance to me on their own and demonstrated their complete unanimity in this matter. Had I delayed the matter, it would have posed a greater danger to the unity, integrity and solidarity of Islam. How could I send for you when there was no time." Ali ﷺ listened to what Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ said with rapt attention and withdrew his complaint gracefully. The next day he pronounced his allegiance to Abu Bakr ﷺ before a large congregation in the Prophet's Mosque.

### **Address of Abu Bakr ﷺ**

After the meeting at Saqifah Banu Sâ'idah and being absolved from his duty of the burial of the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr ﷺ took the oath of allegiance from the general population and then rose to deliver his address. After praising and glorifying Allāh, he said to the people:

"I have been chosen as your chief although I am better than none of you. Thus, if I do good work it is incumbent on you to extend your help and support to me; if I go wrong it is your duty to put me on the right path. Truth and righteousness are a trust and untruth is a breach of trust. The weak among you are strong to me unless I give them full justice, and the strong among you are weak to me unless I receive what is due from them. Abandon not *Jihād*, when the people hold back from *Jihād*, they are put to disgrace. Obey me while I keep obeying Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ; renounce me when I disobey Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ, for obedience to me is not incumbent on you then."

That was the day when thirty-three thousand Companions pledged their allegiance to Abu Bakr ﷺ. The dispute between the *Muhājirin* and the *Anṣār* was solved leaving no hard feelings behind. It was because the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ had thoroughly learned to prefer Faith to temporal affairs and due to this quality no other segment of humanity ever attained the level of development that the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ had gracefully reached.

## **Usâmah's Army marches on**

The people of Yemen and Najd had come into the fold of Islam just a few months before the death of the Prophet ﷺ and Islam had not yet entered their hearts perfectly bringing about the complete transformation of their thoughts and actions. This resulted in men like Aswad and Musailamah raising their heads to claim prophethood and leading a section of new Muslims astray in each territory. The final departure of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came as a golden opportunity for them to cash in on the prevailing shock and feeling of disappointment among the Muslims at large.

Every age produces some mischiefmongers of an evil nature and they try to take advantage of these type of situations. Thus some people and tribes having an extreme lust for power and fame, raised their heads and set about devising ways and means to capture power and bring the Muslims under their direct influence. As a result of the winds of apostasy and hypocrisy blowing here and there, the pure and sincere Muslims felt shocked and deeply disturbed. Had they not been brought up by the Prophet ﷺ and his sacred company to instill courage, determination and firmness, the binding force of Islam would have been miserably disintegrated.

Almost every where in the Arabian continent except Al-Madinah, Makkah and Tâ'if, the flames of apostasy were fiercely raging threatening to burn down the citadel of Islam. Still more disturbing were the reports that forces inimical to Islam had once again mustered courage to invade Al-Madinah, and preparations were on to implement their long standing and wicked plans. The Prophet ﷺ had already dispatched an expedition headed by Usâmah bin Zaid رضي الله عنه to take on the Romans in Syria, which had halted its movement due to the serious illness of the Prophet ﷺ.

Now when Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه wanted to send the same expedition after the death of the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions put forward their suggestion to the Caliph that in the wake of the clouds of apostasy gathering on all sides, the expedition should be held back for sometime. It shows the fathomless depth of courage, grit, determination and power of

Faith wielded by Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ when he answered them, "If I was convinced that a beast would tear me apart after the dispatch of the army, I would not hold back at any cost what the Prophet ﷺ had ordered to go ahead."

In response to the call of the Caliph, the Companions already enlisted collected in the military camp outside Al-Madinah. Although they joined the army of Usâmah ؓ a section still had some reservations about it for two reasons. One, Usâmah ؓ was the son of a slave and he was only 17 years old, and therefore, too young and inexperienced to lead an army of distinguished Companions. Before moving ahead Usâmah sent Umar ؓ as a soldier of his army to Al-Madinah with the message that the eminent Companions should be called back as the headquarters of Islam was under the threat of an enemy attack. The *Ansâr* also sent a message to the Caliph through Umar ؓ that an elderly person of noble stock be appointed as the commander of the Muslim troops. Responding to the message of Usâmah ؓ, the Caliph said, "Had the departure of Muslim troops rendered the city of Al-Madinah vacant and I would be left alone to be taken away by beasts of prey, the march of the army would not be put off." As to the message of the *Ansâr*, Abu Bakr ؓ said "They still carry the impression of arrogance and snobbery in their hearts." Following this he got up and left on foot for the military camp outside Al-Madinah to personally see off Usâmah ؓ and his army. Usâmah ؓ moved ahead and Abu Bakr ؓ walked along with the mount of the commander talking and discussing matters of importance. Usâmah ؓ said to the Caliph, "Either you mount the animal or allow me to get down to accompany you on foot." The Caliph replied, "I shall not ride nor do you need to get down. What harm shall I be inflicted with if I accompany you over some distance in the way of Allâh." This act of Abu Bakr ؓ was the practical answer to the *Ansâr* who had some misgivings regarding the command of Usâmah ؓ.

### Exhortations to Usâmah ؓ:

Walking along with the mount of Usâmah ؓ, the Chief of the believers instructed Usâmah ؓ about a ten-point doctrine, which he should follow strictly during the battle and they are as follows:

1) Do not approach embezzlement. (2) Do not tell a lie. (3) Do not commit a breach of trust. (4) Do not kill children, women or the aged. (5) Do not cut down trees with fruit. (6) Slaughter not camels, cows or goats for any purpose other than eating. (7) Call to Islam the people you find. (8) Pay due respect to anyone you meet. (9) Start eating in the Name of Allāh when the meal is served to you. (10) Fight not with those among the Jews and the Christians who have taken refuge in their places of worship. And finally, neither add to what the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has ordered you to do nor subtract from it. Fight the disbelievers with the Name of Allāh and in His way.

Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ went along with Usāmah ؓ up to Jurf and then came back. Before taking leave, he said to Usāmah ؓ, "If you grant permission I want Umar to be in Al-Madinah to assist and give me advice." Usāmah ؓ promptly permitted Umar ؓ to return back to Al-Madinah.

It is significant and exemplary that the Caliph took permission from the military commander to keep Umar ؓ with him although he was totally within his rights to order this on his own.

### Success achieved by Usāmah ؓ:

Usāmah ؓ reached the valleys of Jardon and Balqa' and defeated the Roman army. He returned after forty days with an immense amount of spoils of war and prisoners. Even as the departure of the Muslim army was in an atmosphere charged with disorder, disruption and misdirected emotion, and to invade and punish the formidable Romans looked unreasonable and risky to the extreme, the fruits of this adventure were justly wholesome and sweet. It sent terror into the hearts of the apostates and the opponents of Islam and convinced them to the core that the absence of the Prophet ﷺ did not diminish the Muslim's invincible determination and courage and love for Islam. As a result, the claimants of prophethood like Tulaihah Asadi and Musailamah the liar could not muster enough courage to step forth from their own territories. Those who had refused to pay Zakāt meekly surrendered to the will of Islam. Moreover, the substantial quantity of spoils of war played a significant role in strengthening the Islamic army and improving the economic condition of the believers.



## Trial of Apostasy

To assume that the death of the Prophet ﷺ sent Arabia except Al-Madinah, Makkah and Tâ'if into the fold of apostasy is not the truth. They had not shifted from *Tauhid* to *Shirk* (polytheism) all of a sudden and took to idol worship. The fact is that even the false claimants to prophethood were not against *Salât* (prayer). They were, however, particularly against the payment of *Zakât* for it went against their sense of freedom and dignity, and these new Muslims were ahead of others in rejecting what they claimed as an 'undignified' demand of Islam. Since they could be easily aroused against this most important pillar of Islam, men like Musailamah and Tulaihah used it as a tool to fulfil their evil plans.

In short, the issue before the Muslims was not polytheism and idol worship; what was threatening and injurious was the question of unity and solidarity of the system Islam had established at the cost of many sacrifices. The rejection of the demand of *Zakât* was even more dangerous to the cause of Islam than the battles fought by the Muslims against the external forces inimical to Islam. The Chief of the believers, Abu Bakr ﷺ held an emergency meeting of the Companions on this explosive issue. But they put forward their opinion against fighting with the rejecters of *Zakât*, just as they were not in favor of Usamah ﷺ leading an army against the Romans. But on this occasion too, the inimitable courage and determination of Abu Bakr ﷺ prevailed over all kinds of anxieties and misgivings. He announced with indomitable spirit and firmness that he would go and fight against any tribe who refused to pay even one animal or one rope that was due.

In the meantime the deputations of the apostates came to Al-Madinah and said, "We perform prayer but we want an exemption from *Zakât*." But this hard-hitting reply made them silently go back to their respective places. In the wake of the hard line adopted by Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ, they rose as one man against the Islamic State. The prevailing confusion and threat to the unity and integrity of Islam needed a leader of outstanding courage and determination. Abu Bakr ﷺ was fit to face this disorderly situation and the unruly people who



were making preparations to invade Al-Madinah, in the absence of Muslim troops, who were fighting the Romans far away from their center.

However, even in the face of such a trying situation, the Caliph of Islam was not ready to give any concession concerning his decision and would not compromise with the forces seeking to break the basic tenets of Islam. He was in full control of the situation both internally and externally. He kept himself in close contact with the Muslim forces fighting in the far off lands and issued the necessary orders to the collectors of *Zakât*. He encouraged the people of Al-Madinah to keep firm and unified and he made the preparations necessary to deal with the opportunistic alliances of those who had vested interests.

He asked the fighters among the people of Al-Madinah to keep alert and be on guard in front of the Prophet's Mosque, while Ali, Zubair, Talhah and Abdullah bin Mas'ud ؓ were sent on patrol duty around Al-Madinah. Information reached the headquarters that the people of Abs, Dhubyân, Banu Kinânah and Banu Asad tribes had collected to attack the Muslims. Their march towards Al-Madinah was checked by the patrols, which also sent news to Al-Madinah about the enemy movement. Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ himself went to repulse the enemy attack up to Dhu Khushub. However, when Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ went again for an encounter, they used drums and other instruments that caused the camels of the Muslims to get scared and they fled back to Al-Madinah. Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ organized them and made a fierce charge on the enemy and routed them completely killing many of them after a fight of five or six hours.

Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ sent the spoils of war to Al-Madinah under the charge of Nu'mân bin Muqrin ؓ and a small party, and himself went to Dhul-Qassah in hot pursuit of the enemy. Meanwhile the enemy invaded some tribes in the back area and martyred many Muslims there. When Abu Bakr ؓ came to know of the incident on his return, he vowed to kill as many apostates equal to the number of Muslims who were martyred at their hands. He was on the verge of leaving Al-Madinah when Usamah ؓ entered Al-Madinah with booty in large quantity. Because the detachment was terribly exhausted, he left it in Al-Madinah to take rest and guard it against any fresh attack. And he

himself left Al-Madinah at the head of a small detachment and went up to Dhu Khushub and Dhul-Qassah raiding their centers and routing who ever faced them. After finishing his task, he stayed at Abraq for a couple of days before his departure to Al-Madinah.

### Edict of Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ:

Immediately after his return to Al-Madinah, Abu Bakr ﷺ penned an edict and sent copies to the apostate tribes through his messengers to be read out in public gatherings. The contents of the edict were as follows:

From Abu Bakr, the Caliph of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, to each and every person whether he has accepted Islam or not. Let it be known to one and all that Allāh the Almighty sent Muhammad ﷺ as a true Prophet who sought to give glad tidings and to warn and to call to Allāh by His Order, he is the illuminated lamp of guidance. Allāh the Almighty guides one to the right path who accepts the invitation of Islam, but anyone who rejects it is made to show obedience through struggle and fighting. The Prophet of Allāh ﷺ made his final departure after accomplishing his task of calling people towards Islam and the straight path of Allāh. And Allāh the Almighty has already acquainted all with this in the Qur'an:

"Verily, you will die and they will also die." (39:30)

"And We granted not to any human being immortality before you, the you die, would they live forever?" (21:34)

"Muhammad is no more than a Messenger and indeed Messengers have passed away before him. Thus, if he is dead or killed, will you turn back? If anyone turns back, he will do no harm to Allāh the Almighty. Allāh the Almighty will give good reward to those who give thanks." (3:144)

Thus, one who worshipped Muhammad ﷺ then Muhammad ﷺ is now dead and gone, but one who worshipped Allāh Alone then Allāh is living and He has not died; He is neither overpowered by sleep nor touched by drowsiness. He looks

after His Own Orders and will at anytime take revenge on His enemies. I exhort you all to fear Allâh, to share what the Prophet ﷺ brought in the form of light and guidance from Allâh, to follow the guidance of Allâh and to hold firmly to the rope of the religion of Allâh. Anyone who is not guided by Allâh the Almighty, goes astray; he is helpless and alone who is deprived of the support of Allâh. No deed of a man is acceptable in this world and the Hereafter while he rejects Islam. I have come to know that some of you have turned to follow Satan and acts of ignorance forsaking Allah the Almighty. Allâh the Almighty says that Satan is your sworn enemy, so be hostile to Satan, for he seeks to make his followers dwellers of Hell-fire. I have decided to send the detachment made up of the *Muhâjirin* and the *Ansâr* to you, they follow virtue. I have instructed them not to fight anybody without calling them to Islam and to lend support to those who accept Islam, to keep from evil and reject not the good, and to fight those who reject Islam. It is good for the one who accepts Islam. I have ordered my emissary to read out this message at a large gathering. When a Muslim detachment draws near and its caller calls the *Adhân*, you too respond to it by calling the *Adhân*, this symbolizes your acceptance of Islam and thus spares your life. If you fail to call the *Adhân*, you will invite the Muslims to attack.

### Uprooting the Apostates:

As a follow-up action, after the dispatch of emissaries with the circulars, Abu Bakr ﷺ made eleven banners. Each to be given to eleven heads who were chosen to lead separate detachments with the instructions that they should take some men from Makkah, Tâ'if and other places, and leave the rest to look after the home front. The first of the flags was handed over to Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ with the order to launch his first attack at Tulaihah bin Khuwailid Asadi and to make Mâlik bin Nuwairah his next target at Butah. Another standard was given to Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl to make an attack on Musailamah the liar at Yamâmah. Shurahbil bin Hasanah ﷺ was given the third banner to first assist Ikrimah ﷺ and then go to Hadramout to invade

Banu Kindah and Banu Qudā'ah. The fourth one was entrusted to Khālīd bin Saeed bin Al-Ās to go to Syria and put down uprisings with a firm hand. Fifth standard was given to Amr bin Al-Ās for Banu Qudā'ah. Hudhaifah bin Mihsan was sent to the people of Oman, and Arfajah bin Harthamah to Mahrah with the seventh one. The eighth one was given to Tarqah bin Hāḥib to go to Banu Sulaim and Banu Hawāzin. Suwaid bin Muqarrin was ordered to go to Yemen (Tihāmah) with the ninth one. Ala' bin Hadrāmī with the tenth standard was sent to Bahrain. Muhājir bin Abu Umayyah was sent to San'ā' with the eleventh. All these heads were given a circular with the same content, which is given here:

### The Manifesto of Abu Bakr Siddiq :

This is a covenant from Abu Bakr, the Caliph of the Messenger of Allāh, which is handed over to so-and-so, the head of the detachment on the eve of his departure to fight the apostates. From the commander of the detachment I have obtained his undertaking to fear Allāh the Almighty in all affairs of life inwardly and outwardly: I have ordered him to make them see reason before falling on the apostates and to stop fighting if and when they accept Islam and then make them learn their rights and duties and their rights be given and the duties due on them be taken without showing concessions whatsoever. Whoever keeps any other kind of belief after the confessing of Islam is left to Allāh to be accountable to Him. But those who will carry the matter to the point of fighting by rejecting Islam outright, if overpowered or defeated by the believers, their spoils are to be distributed among the Muslims after taking out the fifth part therefrom. I have also issued orders to the commanders to stop their troops from creating disturbances and taking hasty actions resulting in chaos and havoc and from admitting strangers to their detachment without their knowing perfectly their identity. I have also written them to treat the Muslims politely and show mercy to the people while camping at and decamping a place.

All these detachments left Al-Madinah in the month of Jumāda Al-Ukhra 11 AH, for the territories assigned to them.

## **Tulaihah Asadi**

Tulaihah was a soothsayer who entered Islam but claimed for himself prophethood during the last days of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. Some tribes of Children of Israel joined his party. Dirār bin Al-Azwar ؓ was sent to punish him but the task was not completed because he hurried back to Al-Madinah on hearing the sad news of the demise of the Prophet ﷺ. During that period, Tulaihah Asadi had an opportunity to rebuild his position. The people of Ghatfān and Hawāzin tribes who had already been routed by Abu Bakr ؓ collected themselves once again to join the bandwagon of Tulaihah's party. He pitched his camp at Buzākhah, the well-known stream of Najd, and the people of Ghatfān, Hawāzin, Banu Asad, Banu Āmir and Banu Tai gathered around him to make it a massive force.

Khālid bin Walid ؓ launched an attack on Tulaihah's troops at Buzākhah, which was fighting under the command of Tulaihah's brother Khayyāl. Tulaihah himself was sitting farther from his troops in a mantle pretending to be waiting for a 'revelation'. The battle became intense.

When the apostates' troops began to suffer reverses, Uyainah bin Hisn came to Tulaihah and asked him if any revelation was sent down to him. "Not yet," Tulaihah replied. After a while he came again, repeated the same question, and received the same reply. Now the Muslim detachment was clearly dominating the battle scene and the apostates were getting routed. When Uyainah came to Tulaihah and put the same question to him for the third time, he replied rather cunningly, "Jibril has come to me to say that things will happen according to what is in store for us." Uyainah got enraged at this artful reply and exclaimed, "O people! Tulaihah is a liar, so I am leaving now." Having heard this, the apostates took to their heels leaving behind a great number of dead and many were captured. A large number of people returned to Islam on the spot.

Tulaihah, along with his wife fled on horseback and took refuge with the Qudā'ah tribe. When all the other tribes, including his own, came back to the fold of Islam, Tulaihah also confessed Islam and came to

Al-Madinah during the caliphate of Umar ؓ. Uyainah was brought before Khâlid bin Walid ؓ as a captive and was sent to Al-Madinah. Here he accepted Islam in state of humiliation but afterward he made himself sincere to it.

The fugitives from the army of Tulaihah, made up of the Ghattân, Sulaim and Hawâzin tribes, collected at Hawâb and chose Salma bint Mâlik bin Hudhaifah bin Badr bin Zafar as their chief. Following this they made large-scale preparations against the Muslims. Informed of this, Khâlid bin Walid ؓ moved to meet the lurking threat. Salma was herself heading the army. Khâlid bin Walid ؓ attacked the enemy which resulted in fierce fighting between the two forces. About one hundred apostates were killed safeguarding her dromedary. At last she fell down from the injured she-camel and was instantly killed. Her followers immediately disappeared from the battleground.

About the same time a chieftain of Banu Sulaim, Al-Fajâh bin Abd Yâhil called on Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and said to him, "I am a Muslim. Please help me with weapons so that I can go and fight against the apostates." Abu Bakr ؓ granted his request. When he left Al-Madinah, he pronounced his apostasy and sniped at the sections of Banu Hawâzin and Banu Sulaim who had confessed Islam. After being informed of this treachery, Abu Bakr ؓ sent Abdullah bin Qais ؓ with a small party who caught the culprit, who was trying to escape, and brought him to Al-Madinah where he was killed.

### **Sajâh and Mâlik bin Nuwairah**

Banu Tamim inhabited a few settlements where, during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ, Mâlik bin Nuwairah, Waki' bin Mâlik, Safwân bin Safwân, Qais bin Âsim were working as collectors of *Zakât* and other charities. Now as the news of the Prophet's demise spread, Qais bin Âsim turned apostate while Mâlik bin Nuwairah expressed his joy. However, Safwân bin Safwân ؓ remained firm as a Muslim.

In the meantime Sajâh bint Al-Hârith bin Suwaid of the Taghlib tribe declared her prophethood. Hudhail bin Imrân—the chief of Banu Taghlib, Uqbah bin Hilâl—the chief of Banu Namir and Salil bin Qais—the chief of Banu Shaibân accepted her claim. She was able to collect

about four thousand soldiers around her and she moved ahead to invade Al-Madinah. She came to know that Khâlid bin Walid ؓ was also on the move from the opposite direction. This news was quite disturbing for her. Moreover Sajâh and Musailamah were afraid of each other, as both of them had claimed prophethood. Their anxiety multiplied when they came to know that both Ikrimah and Shurahbil ؓ had reached Yamâmah with Muslim detachments. Thus both of them were practicing caution.

At last, Musailamah wrote a letter to Sajâh to find out her intentions. She wrote back, "I wanted to invade Al-Madinah. Since both of us are prophets, let us launch a joint attack." Musailamah very haughtily replied, "While the Prophet Muhammad was alive, I had surrendered half of my country in his favor; after him I am the sole ruler of the country. However, since you too claim prophethood, I shall confer half of my prophethood on you. It is better that you come to me alone leaving your troops behind so that we can sit together in consultations concerning the division of the prophethood and the invasion of Al-Madinah."

### **Marriage of the Liar-prophetess:**

Immediately after receiving the message of Musailamah she left to meet him. He welcomed her in a camp specially erected in front of his fortress. They held secret talks, which resulted in Sajâh accepting his prophethood and giving herself to him in marriage. She stayed with Musailamah for three days and then came back to her camp. The army asked about the bride price. She sent this request back to Musailamah and he exempted them from the dawn and night prayers as her bride price. As she moved ahead she came across the Muslim army led by Khâlid bin Walid ؓ. The soldiers of Sajâh became so terrified that they fled to far off places leaving Sajâh alone and she could barely save herself. She joined her tribe and passed the rest of her life in obscurity.

### **Assassination of Mâlik bin Nuwairah:**

It has already been mentioned that Mâlik bin Nuwairah expressed joy over the death of the Prophet ﷺ. He had also made peace with Sajâh

but had later on severed his relation with her. When he was captured and brought before Khâlid bin Walid ؓ, the Muslims argued that the people of the settlement of Mâlik bin Nuwairah had responded with *Adhân* and so he should not be killed. Others discounted this point since the *Adhân* was not called as a response and he should be killed as per the order of the caliph of the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ. The investigation of Khâlid bin Walid ؓ could not bring the matter to light. But during his talk with Khâlid ؓ he referred to the Prophet ﷺ more than once as: "Your chief has said such and such." Being enraged at such a manner of address, Khâlid ؓ said, "Was he not your chief?" But Mâlik bin Nuwairah did not make a satisfactory reply.

According to Tabari, Dirâr bin Al-Azwar ؓ, who was then standing near by with his sword in hand, cut the head of Mâlik off after taking a sign from Khâlid ؓ. Such are the things that happen on the battlefield. But historians mention it for other reasons. Abu Qatâdah ؓ was also in the detachment of Khâlid bin Walid ؓ and was in support of the section which argued that *Adhân* was called in the settlement of Mâlik bin Nuwairah. Because of this he grew angry at the killing of Mâlik and returned to Al-Madinah without taking permission from Khâlid bin Walid ؓ, the commander of the Muslim detachment. He lodged a complaint with the Caliph that Khâlid bin Walid kills the Muslims without valid reasons. Umar ؓ and others advised the Caliph to first depose Khâlid ؓ and then take retaliatory action against him. It was easy to accuse him of killing a Muslim because he (Khâlid ؓ) had later married the wife of Mâlik bin Nuwairah.

After a patient hearing of all the details, Abu Bakr ؓ found Abu Qatâdah ؓ guilty of disobeying his commander and leaving the detachment without his permission. He was then ordered to go back and join Khâlid ؓ and carry out his orders and he did so accordingly. Abu Bakr ؓ then informed Umar ؓ and the others that Khâlid ؓ had merely committed a mistake in judgment. According to the principles of war and the military system, Khâlid—the Sword among the Swords of Allâh, could neither be brought to pay *Qisâs* (retaliation) nor deposed. Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ then paid the blood money from the public treasury.



## Musailamah the Liar

Banu Hanifah was one of the tribes, which appeared in the form of a deputation before the Prophet ﷺ after the conquest of Makkah. Musailamah bin Hubaib belonged to this same tribe. On his return to Yamamah from Al-Madinah, he heard about the illness of the Prophet ﷺ and declared his prophethood. He also sent a letter to the Prophet ﷺ saying, "Since prophethood is being shared by both of us, each one is entitled to possess half of the country." The Prophet ﷺ wrote back: "In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allāh to Musailamah the liar. Peace be upon whom who follows the guidance. After that, the earth is Allāh's. He gives it as a heritage to whom He wills of His slaves and the end is for the pious."

Following this letter, the Prophet ﷺ sent Rajjāl bin Anfuh, a respectable man of Banu Hanifah to bring Musailamah back to the path of guidance.

Rajjāl reached Yamamah and then lent support to Musailamah instead, and became his follower. His notorious mission gained wide popularity. At last, Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl ؓ was sent to punish him and then Shurhabil bin Hasanah ؓ was dispatched with reinforcements. Ikrimah ؓ invaded Musailamah's army before the arrival of the reinforcements and was defeated. Having heard this news, Abu Bakr ؓ sent word to Ikrimah ؓ not to return to Al-Madinah but to join Hudhaifah and Arfajah ؓ and fight with the people of Mahrah and Oman under their command. Having finished that campaign he had to leave for Yemen and Hadramout along with his detachment to join Muhājir bin Abu Umayyah ؓ. He wrote to Shurhabil bin Hasanah ؓ to go towards the territories of Khālid bin Walid ؓ; and leave for Qudā'ah and fight along with the people under the command of Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ and punish the apostates there. In the meantime, Khālid bin Walid ؓ came back to Al-Madinah. Abu Bakr ؓ instead of calling him to account, sent him to punish Musailamah the liar at the head of a detachment including both the Muhājirin and the Ansār, which actually was a sign of respect to him.

## Deviation to Nationality:

Musailamah had with him forty thousand warriors of the Rabi'ah tribe. Some of them knew him as a liar but their misdirected sense of national pride led them to wish him success. They would openly say, "Musailamah is a liar while Muhammad is truthful. However, to all of us, the liar-prophet of Rabi'ah is dearer than the truthful Prophet of Banu Mudar." After sending Khâlid bin Walid ؓ, the Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ dispatched a few more columns to strengthen the army of Khâlid ؓ who joined him on the way. Now the strength of the Muslim army under the command of Khâlid ؓ rose to thirteen thousand. When he was at a distance of one day from the city of Yamamah, he sent a small column as an advance guard.

The same day Musailamah had dispatched Mujjâ'ah bin Murârah at the head of sixty men to snipe at Banu Tamim. Thus this party came across the advance guard of the Muslim army. In the encounter, all the apostates were killed and their head Mujjâ'ah was brought before Khâlid ؓ. When Khâlid ؓ reached Yamamah, Musailamah came out of the city and encamped in a fortified garden at the gate of the city.

## Furious Fight:

The forty thousand strong army of Musailamah the liar attacked the Muslim troops not exceeding thirteen thousand in number. A very furious and dreadful fight broke out. The Muslim fighters sustained the fierce attack of the enemy with exemplary patience and firmness. Soon after they collected themselves at the center and fell on the enemy like hungry tigers and routed them thoroughly. The apostates fled the field but collected at the gate of the garden and showed some courage and firmness. At this stage Thâbit bin Qais ؓ, the standard bearer of the Muslim army was honored with martyrdom. Zaid bin Khattâb ؓ lifted the standard and the Muslims showed such valor and virility that the enemy had to retreat behind the walls of the garden but the Muslims broke into it.

Now the people asked Musailamah, "When will the promise of victory be fulfilled that your god has given to you?" He replied, "This is not

the time to talk all this; everyone is now required to fight for the safety of his wife and children." When his garden too turned into the battleground, Musailamah got on his horse and began to call his people to give battle. However, when he witnessed that the situation was under the full control of the Muslims, he got down and moved secretly towards the exit. Wahshi (the one who assassinated Hamzah ؓ) happened to be at the gate of the garden aiming at Musailamah, he threw his lance so forcefully that it cut through his double coat of mail and cut across his belly. Panic and terror overtook the enemy and in a short while there was none left to be seen on the battlefield other than the Muslims. This battle took a heavy toll on the enemy force leaving seventeen thousand dead while one thousand from the Muslim side were honored with martyrdom. Among them were a large number of Huffâz (those who had committed the entire Qur'ân to memory).

The rest of Banu Hanifah fled the battlefield fleeing for their lives leaving their women and children behind. Since a great number of Muslims had sustained injuries, Khâlid bin Walid ؓ decided to conquer the city of Yamâmah the next day. Muja'ah bin Murârah, the captive took advantage of this decision. He misled Khâlid ؓ by saying that the greater number of men of his tribe were still alive and they were well-equipped and formidable enough to win by the power of the sword. He then asked Khâlid ؓ that if he was freed, he could go to persuade them not to give battle. Thus both the city and its citizens would come under their control without blood and toil. Khâlid ؓ accepted his proposal and freed him.

Muja'ah went into the city and asked the women to get on the ramparts with their weapons. He then came back and said to Khâlid ؓ, "My people are not ready to make peace merely in return for their safety." When Khâlid ؓ looked towards the city, he found that the ramparts showed nothing but swords and spears, which verified the statement of Muja'ah. Keeping an eye on his injured soldiers and the expectation of a long drawn out battle, Khâlid ؓ thought it reasonable to make peace with the enemy. Thus he offered to leave for them half of their wealth and possessions, half of the planted gardens and half of the captives of Banu Hanifah. Muja'ah went to the city once again and came back with the report: "They are not ready to

accept this offer, you can win peace by taking from them one-fourth of their possessions." Khâlid ؓ agreed to the proposal and the peace treaty was written down.

Following this, Khâlid ؓ went inside the city. He, to his utmost amazement, found there none but women and children. "Why did you play a trick on me?" Khâlid ؓ asked Mujjâ'ah. "My people were virtually on the brink of death and destruction, so it was my duty to pull them out of this situation, please excuse me," Mujjâ'ah replied. Khâlid ؓ kept silent not thinking in the least about breaking the agreement. A short while after Musailamah bin Waqsh, an emissary of Abu Bakr ؓ gave Khâlid ؓ a letter from the Caliph directing him to kill their men and make their women and children captives in case the battle was won. But the peace treaty was signed before the arrival of the emissary, so the order from Al-Madinah could not be implemented. This event is a memorable example of how particular the Muslims were about keeping their promises and upholding their treaties.

Khâlid bin Walid ؓ sent a deputation of Banu Hanifah to Abu Bakr ؓ with a letter. He had mentioned in it the details about the recent victory and Banu Hanifah's re-entry to Islam. Abu Bakr ؓ held them in high esteem and bade farewell to them in the same spirit. The battle of Yamamah took place in Dhul-Hijjah 11 AH.

### **Hatm bin Dubal'ah**

It has already been mentioned that Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ had sent Ala' bin Al-Hadrami ؓ to Bahrain at the head of a detachment. Banu Abdul-Qais and Banu Bakr bin Wâ'il along with their branches inhabited Bahrain. It has also been stated that Jârud bin Al-Mualla ؓ had once represented Abdul-Qais tribe to the Prophet ﷺ. The people of Abdul-Qais tribe renounced Islam when they heard of the death of the Prophet ﷺ with the idea that had he been a Prophet, he would not have died. Jârud bin Al-Mualla ؓ assembled his people and put the question to them, "Had there been other Prophets before Muhammad ﷺ?" "Yes, there had been many," they admitted with one voice. "Had they not passed away after passing their lives like common people?" he put another question. "They all passed away after passing their days of life," they admitted. "The Prophet ﷺ also completed his span

of life and then passed away exactly in the same manner," he said and called in a loud voice: "I testify that there is no God but Allāh and Muhammad in His slave and Messenger." The hearts of the people of Abdul-Qais tribe were moved so deeply that they all expressed deep sorrow for their wrongdoing and returned to the fold of Islam.

Though Abdul-Qais tribe was saved through the timely efforts of Jārud bin Al-Mualla, but Banu Bakr bin Wā'il tribe took to apostasy and made Hatm their chief. He marched ahead with a large number of men from Banu Bakr and camped between Qatif and Hijr. He then sent a small party to Abdul-Qais tribe to make them apostates and to come back. However, Abdul-Qais flatly refused to turn apostate. Hatm then sent Ma'rur bin Suwaid with a group to either make them apostate or fight with them. In the meantime Ala' bin Al-Hadrami arrived in Bahrain with his detachment. He sent word to Jārud bin Al-Mualla to launch an attack on Hatm in the company of Banu Abdul-Qais.

With the spread of this news, Muslims from the surrounding areas collected around Ala' bin Al-Hadrami while the apostates gathered round Hatm. Ala' bin Al-Hadrami moved ahead with his army and camped near the military camp of Hatm. Hatm had dug trenches around his camp. The fight between the two started but none of them was crowned with victory even after a long period of one month. However, Ala' bin al-Hadrami lost his patience and launched such a furious attack across the enemy trenches that the enemy force was filled with wild terror, and with the killing of Hatm at the hands of Qais bin Asim, the entire enemy front was completely routed. Gradually all the apostates turned back to Islam.

### Laqit bin Mālīk

It has been mentioned above that Abu Bakr Siddiq had sent Hudhaifah bin Mihsan to Oman and Arfajah bin Harthamah to the people of Mahrah with the order that they should keep together. On hearing the news of the death of the Prophet, Laqit declared his prophethood in Oman. The people of Oman and Mahrah turned apostate and forced out of their territory the collectors of charity appointed by the Prophet. Abu Bakr had sent a message to

Hudhaifah bin Mihsan Himyari ﷺ to first go to Oman and then leave for Mahrah after finishing his task. He had also directed Ikrimah ﷺ to join Hudhaifah and Arfajah ﷺ in Oman. Thus all the three commanders of the Muslim detachments stayed together in Oman. On being informed, Laqit collected his fighters and moved ahead to face the Muslim army. Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl was the head of the advance guard while Hudhaifah had the command of the right wing and Arfajah the left one and in the middle of the army were the rich and influential persons of Oman who had been firm on Islam.

Fighting broke out at the time of the dawn prayer. The Islamic army was fighting from the low-lying areas while the enemy force was giving battle from the high ground. At the outset the Muslim troops suffered reverses but the proverbial patience and firmness of the believers turned the tables and forced the enemy to retreat. They turned and ran away leaving behind a thousand dead, four thousand as captive and a large quantity of booty. The Muslim army returned to Al-Madinah victoriously. Ikrimah ﷺ left for Mahrah and after a short period of time, the entire Oman returned firmly to Islam.

### **Apostasy in Mahrah**

Mahrah had some people from Oman and some others from Abdul-Qais, Azd and Banu Sa'd tribes that inhabited this territory. But they were divided in two factions after turning apostate, each faction fighting with the other. In this situation Ikrimah ﷺ arrived in Mahrah and one of the factions accepted Islam. The next one, whose head was Musabbih, rejected the offer and remained adamant in his attitude. Thereupon Ikrimah ﷺ attacked the apostates giving them a crushing defeat and killing their chief. This victory led a large number of people from all the tribes to join the forces of Islam.

### **Apostasy in Yemen**

Aswad Ansi, referred to before, had claimed prophethood for himself and created disturbances all over Yemen. But he met his doom during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. Although Islam had been gaining ground after the cloud of apostasy cleared, the death of the Prophet ﷺ

let it stage a comeback. They were now getting strong under the leadership of two chiefs, Qais bin Makshuh and Amr bin Ma'dikarib. The Muslims were small in numbers and were brutally tortured by the Yemenite apostates, with the result they had left the area. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ had sent Muhājir bin Abu Umayyah ﷺ with a detachment to pass through Makkah and Tā'if and then to go to Najrān taking Muslim fighters from these cities. Qais and Amr had already received the news of Muhājir's arrival. Amr bin Ma'dikarib was a well known wrestler whose swordsmanship had won him admiration throughout the country.

Muhājir ﷺ saw himself and his army surrounded by a swarm of enemy forces and this infused in them a sense of courage, fervor and determination, and they attacked the enemy with full force and vigor. The chieftains, Qais and Amr were caught after a thorough defeat of the enemy troops. Qais and Amr were sent to Al-Madinah and both of them admitted their wrongs and returned to Islam.

Muhājir bin Umayyah ﷺ reached San'a' and cleared the entire territory of apostates. It was there that Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl met him. From there both the commanders made a joint march to punish Banu Kindah who were busy making large-scale preparations against the Muslims under the command of Ash'ath bin Qais and their strength was increasing day by day. Informed of this, Muhājir bin Abu Umayyah ﷺ took a fast squad of horsemen from his army and hurried towards Ash'ath leaving his army under the command of Ikrimah ﷺ. He attacked the enemy force so suddenly and violently that they fled in terror. Ash'ath made a quick escape and took refuge in a fort where he was joined by other apostates. Muhājir bin Abu Umayyah ﷺ besieged the fort. In the meantime he was joined by Ikrimah ﷺ.

The severity of the siege and the blockade of reinforcements forced him to lay down his arms. He then appealed to the Muslim commander to spare the lives of only nine persons including his wife and children. But Ash'ath forgot to include his own name. Thus all, exclusive of those nine persons were held captive. Ash'ath was also among the captives. They were presented before Abu Bakr ﷺ. Ash'ath expressed regret for his past deeds and accepted Islam on the

spot. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ set free all the captives including Ash'ath issuing them strong warnings not to repeat their past actions.

### **Complete Eradication of Apostasy**

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ was able to put down all the uprisings of apostasy in less than one year. Now the entire Arab Peninsula was free from the filth of polytheism and apostasy. Not a tinge of malaise of this nature was to be traced anywhere within the bounds of Arabian continent. Only a few months before, the sky of Islam looked cloudy everywhere except Al-Madinah, Makkah and Tâ'if, and swords and spears, lances and arrows seemed to be flying everywhere. However, in this very short period the situation turned around completely.

It was unflinching courage and unyielding determination that faced the hostile storm and stress on all fronts and came out victorious in all events. Even the legendary grit and valor of Rustam and Isphandiyar could not come face to face with the hundredth part of what was shown by Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ. And the reason is that the qualities of head and heart displayed by the Caliph of the Prophet ﷺ were the direct result of his upbringing under the blessed shadow of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.

The army of Siddiq ﷺ had no doubt, matchless men of lasting courage like Khâlid, Ikrimah, Shurhabil, and Hudhaifah ﷺ, but it was the dauntless courage of Abu Bakr ﷺ, which kept control over the state of affairs, organized the campaigns and dispatched the detachments to far off lands. He never allowed fear, anxiety or timidity to enter the hearts of the true believers. His strategies of war had no parallel and Muslim commanders were leading their detachments and Muslim troops were fighting only according to the plans chalked out by the Caliph of the Prophet ﷺ.

At first consideration it appears that the eleven detachments sent to various places were instrumental in wiping out apostasy from the face of Arabia, but in fact, it was simply the clever devices and the expert opinion of Abu Bakr ﷺ alone that swept away all the rubbish lying in the path of Islam. And this gigantic task was accomplished within a



very short span of a few months. In the discouraging and frustrating situation that he was facing, none else was there to show such a magnificent farsightedness as he demonstrated. He neither agreed to hold back the expedition of Usâmah bin Zaid planned by the Prophet ﷺ himself during his last days nor did he pay heed to Umar's outbursts nor did he delay the collection of *Zakât* from the apostates. Who could then be the true successor of the Prophet ﷺ in his temporal affairs?

## **Rome and Persia**

There were two fabulously magnificent and large empires existing at the time of the advent of the Prophet ﷺ, the Roman and the Persian. The world was then ruled by these two civilizations. Arabia was steeped in dismal darkness where the last Prophet ﷺ was raised. It was through Islam that a new power and a new civilization emerged and engulfed the glittering civilizations of both Rome and Persia and left its mark as the only important power.

There was a time when the Persian Empire had in its fold the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Indus River, Kashmir, Tibet, Mount Altai and the Caspian Sea. Alexander the Great of Greece tore this large and grand empire to pieces. But Persian culture and civilization were still going strong. About four hundred years before the advent of the Prophet ﷺ, Ardsher Babkân laid the foundation of the Sassanid dynasty and brought under its control the Persian Gulf, the Euphrates, the Caspian Sea, the Indus, Oxus and the whole continent of Asia.

The center of Roman power was Rome, the city of Italy, which was ruled over by Julius Caesar and his heir Augustus. Egypt, Asia Minor and the whole of Europe formed part of the Roman Empire. It was later divided into two parts. While Rome remained the capital of the western part, the eastern part made Constantinople its capital. The king of Constantinople was also called Caesar and he ruled over Egypt, Abyssinia, Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor and the Balkans. The Eastern Roman Rule was far ahead of Western Rome in grandeur and power. The two parts had no natural border between them and so they were occasionally at war with one another.

At the time of the birth of the Prophet ﷺ, Nushirwan Sassani was the emperor of Persia and his grandson Chosroes (Khosrau) was the ruler when Muhammad ﷺ was honored with Prophethood. Rebellion broke out against Caesar Publius, his nobles and the subjects dethroned and killed him. Heraclius, the son of the governor of African territories was enthroned in Constantinople as the Caesar. In the meantime the Persians and the Romans rose up against each other and the war between the two dragged on for six or seven years. During the eighth year of Prophethood, the Persians conquered Syria and took away the Cross when they captured Bait-ul-Maqdis (Jerusalem).

The polytheists of Makkah expressed wild jubilation at the victory of the Persians, for the Persians were polytheists while the Romans were people of the Book. The Muslims naturally had sympathy for the Romans, so it was sad news for them. Allāh the Almighty revealed the Verses of *Sûrat Ar-Rum* and let them know that although Rome had been defeated at that time, but in a few years they would gain victory to the rejoicing of the Muslims and so it happened. Heraclius rose from the position of defeat and frustration and after preparing for six or seven years with indomitable courage and determination, took his revenge on the Persians on the battlefield of Syria.

The Romans defeated the Persians on one hand, and about the same time, the Makkan disbelievers tasted a crushing defeat at the hands of the Muslims on the other. Thus the prophecy of the Qur'ān came true word for word. And with this, started a new spate of battles between the two rivals, which came to an end only in 7 AH, when they at last made peace after large-scale bloodshed and destruction. After winning peace, both of them set out on the way to progress and prosperity. It was the same year that the Prophet ﷺ sent invitation letters to a number of monarchs.

Chosroes of Persia received the letter from the Prophet ﷺ at Madâ'in and he tore it up with disdain, while Heraclius of the Roman Empire showed due respect to it. Not only did Chosroes show disrespect to the letter of the Prophet ﷺ but he sent word to his governor Bâdhân in Yemen to round up the Arabian Prophet and send him to Madâ'in. Bâdhân sent two persons to Al-Madinah who appeared before the

Prophet ﷺ and informed him of the royal order. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Chosroes, whom you treat as your god, has been killed by his son last night." When both of them went back to Bādhān they came to know that Chosroes was killed by his son, Sherweh.

The assassination of Chosroes took place the same night the Prophet ﷺ referred to as the night when Bādhān, the governor of Yemen embraced Islam. With his acceptance of Islam, the religion of Allāh spread rapidly in the whole country. The Prophet ﷺ approved Bādhān as the governor of Yemen. Sherweh was too deeply preoccupied with his internal problems to turn towards the Muslims and Arabia. After many turns of events, Purān, the daughter of Chosroes Pervez and the sister of Sherweh took the throne but could rule the country only for one year. The Prophet ﷺ passed away during her time. After many successors, Yazdgurd was on the throne of Persia when it fell to the Muslims. In short, the lofty palace of the Persian Empire kept decaying day by day from the time the letter of the Prophet ﷺ was torn up with disrespect.

The Persians, being polytheists, were most arrogant and haughty. They looked down upon the Arabs and particularly the Muslims, since the news of their strength and patience was a source of constant mental trouble for them, they wanted to uproot them completely. But Allāh the Almighty had entangled them so deeply in family feuds that they had no chance to look towards Arabia.

The Jews and hypocrites who were turned out of Al-Madinah, constantly sent messages to the Persians and the Romans to attack Muslims in Al-Madinah. Since the Heraclius' court was free from such plotting and counter-plotting, he was in a position to implement the conspiratorial suggestions of the hypocrites and the Jews of Al-Madinah.

The time when the Prophet ﷺ had sent his letter to Heraclius, he had also dispatched letters to Busra and Damascus. But both the rulers ill-treated the emissaries of the Prophet ﷺ. Shurahbil, the sub ruler of Busra had gone to the extent that he put the emissary to death. In the battle of Mu'tah, Heraclius was on the side of Shurahbil Ghassāni. Following this, the Romans invaded Arabia and the Prophet ﷺ went to Tabuk along with his army. But the Romans evaded the battle.

The news of the Prophet's death stirred the atmosphere throughout Arabia and this sad news brought both the Romans and Persians to heave a sigh of relief. Since Arabia had risen on the map of the world for the first time as a country wielding, unity, courage, power and influence, the Romans and the Persians could not but watch it with a shade of care and anxiety. The tempest of apostasy added fuel to the flames, with the result the Romans and the Persians began to collect their forces in Syria and Iraq respectively. It was the height of wisdom, prudence, military acumen and the courage of conviction of Abu Bakr ؓ, which guided him to first eradicate apostasy and then galvanize the whole country into fighting back the forces hostile to Islam. It was due to the sterling qualities of the illustrious personality of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ, the first Caliph of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ, that he guided the destiny of Islam with unparalleled determination, firmness, conviction and trust in such crucial moments, which had brought soul-stirring challenges to the very existence of Islam, immediately after the final departure of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ.

### **Policy of the Muslims**

Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ was well aware of the designs of the Persians when he approved the departure of Usāmah's detachment. At a time when Al-Madinah itself was under great pressure, he adopted a policy of buying time before opening a war front against the major powers until the threat of apostasy was put down. He, therefore, sent a small column to Iraq under Muthanna bin Hārithah ؓ not to start a pitched battle but to function as a raiding party meant just to terrorize the men in power so that the Persians dared not attack Arabia. He had in mind the same purpose when he had dispatched Usāmah ؓ against the Romans.

When the situation in Najd and Yamāmah came under control, Siddiq ؓ addressed a letter to Iyād bin Ghanam ؓ in Najd to take with him those Muslims who were still beyond the reach of apostasy, and launch an attack on the upper parts of Iraq. Following this, he wrote another letter to Khālid bin Walid ؓ in Yamāmah to turn towards the lower parts of Iraq. Both the Muslim commanders met at Uballah according to the instructions of the Caliph.

## ***The Battle of Dhât-us-Salâsil***

When Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ took stock of his entire army at Aballah, he found that he had not more than eighteen thousand fighters. His fresh target was Hafir, the Persian province of Iraq, and Hurmuz was its governor who was well known throughout Arabia for his valor and military skill. He was a terror for India also for he so often led assaults on the Indian coast with his war fleet.

Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ first addressed a letter inviting him to Islam. But Hurmuz responded with leading a large and strong army against the Muslim commander. With his instinctive military acumen, Khâlid ﷺ divided his army into three parts. He then handed over the command of one part to Adi bin Hâtim ﷺ, another part he entrusted to Qa'qâ' bin Amr ﷺ and the third one he kept with himself. All the three wings marched ahead to meet at Hafir with the difference of a one-day-journey and pitched their camps facing the Persian army.

First of all, Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ himself came out and threw a challenge to Hurmuz for a duel. He responded to the call and stepped forward. Both the commanders got down from their horses. Khâlid ﷺ was the first to strike. Hurmuz made a hasty retreat and parried the stroke, then he struck Khâlid with agility. Khâlid ﷺ got up quickly, rushed forward and snatched away his sword by twisting his wrist. Now Hurmuz clasped his body which led to wrestling between the two. Khâlid ﷺ lifted him high by his waist with lightening speed and then threw him on the ground so forcefully that he failed to move. Khâlid ﷺ then got on his chest, cut his head off and threw it away.

When a squad of the Persian army witnessed its commander being overpowered, it moved ahead to help him but Qa'qâ' bin Amr ﷺ stood like a rock. Following this, troops from both sides fell on one another and a fierce battle broke out in no time. But the Persians could not withstand the heavy Muslim onslaught and fled in panic and terror.

Hurmuz was such an exalted governor and commander among his people that he wore a crown on his head. This costly crown came to Khâlid ﷺ and it was valued at one hundred thousand dinars. A

section of the Persian army had chained themselves with the determination of winning or dying. But they had to break their chains and flee leaving thousands of men dead and injured. This battle is known as *Dhat-us-Saldsil* because of these chains.

Khâlid asked Muthanna bin Hârithah to give chase to the fleeing Persian fighters. The Muslim forces laid siege round the citadel of Hisn-ul-Marah and conquered it putting the ruler to death. His wife accepted Islam and desired to be married to Muthanna.

### The Battle of Qârin

In response to Hurmuz's call for help, a large troop of reinforcements was immediately sent by the Persian ruler. The frustrating news of Hurmuz's death and his fleeing soldiers greeted it on the way. The fresh fighters of the reinforcements encouraged them to have a fresh encounter with the Muslim troops. They encamped at a canal and the Muslim fighters marched on to meet them. During the ferocious fight, all the three generals, Qârin, Qibâd and Anushjân, were killed leaving behind thirty thousand fighters dead and a large number of the run-away soldiers drowned in the canal.

As a follow-up action after the conquest of the province, Khâlid made the inhabitants pay the *Jizyah* (tax) and appointed a Muslim governor to run the administration according to Islamic law.

### The Battle of Walajah

After Qârin and the other generals were killed, the Persian ruler sent a well-known horseman Andarzagar to lead the Persian army which set out from Madâ'in and arrived at Walajah. At the back of Walajah was dispatched another general, Bahman Jadwaih from Madâ'in, at the head of another very strong army.

However, Khâlid bin Walid marched with his troops and launched an attack on the Persian army which was routed after a fierce battle. Their general also died of thirst right on the battlefield. However, Bahman Jadwaih reached Ullals and the Persian fugitives joined his army. Many Christian Arabs also extended their unconditional support to them.

## **The Battle of Ullais**

Informed of the presence of a large army at Ullais, Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ himself marched ahead and launched his attack. Khâlid ﷺ first called a man for a duel. Mâlik bin Qais was sent from the Persian camp and Khâlid ﷺ killed him. Now an all-out battle started, which resulted in seventy thousand enemy fighters being killed at the hands of the Muslims.

## **Conquest of Hirah**

From Ullais, Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ marched to Hirah and besieged it. When the siege drew long and the citizens were tired of it, the chief of Hirah, Amr bin Abdul-Masih along with others appeared before the Muslim commander. The Persian general and army had already fled in panic with the news of the demise of Chosroes Ardsher. Abdul-Masih won peace in return for two hundred thousand dirhams as tribute. After the conquest, Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ sent Dirâr bin Al-Azwar, Dirâr bin Al-Khattâb, Qa'qâ' bin Amr, Muthanna bin Hârithah and Uyainah bin Ash-Shamâs ﷺ at the head of small columns to make the surrounding tribes and settlers accept either the *jizyah* (tax) or Islam. Thus the entire territory up to the Tigris fell to Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ.

## **Message of Khâlid ﷺ**

From Hirah, Khâlid sent letters to the important personalities and circulars to the feudal lords who were wise enough to obey the truth and follow the good. In the letter addressed to the influential persons of Persia he wrote:

"All praise is due to Allâh Who created chaos in your system and slackened your hypocrisy and broke your unity. Had we not invaded this country, it would have been disastrous for you. Now it is better for you to obey us and we shall leave your territory and go somewhere else. If you refuse to obey us, you will come across such people who love death as you love your life."

Another general circular carried the following:

"Glorified is Allâh the Almighty Who humbled your pride, broke your alliance to pieces and razed your grandeur to the ground. Hence do accept Islam and you will be safe or seek our protection to become *Dhimmi* and pay the *Jizyah*, otherwise, I have brought to you a people who keep death as dear as you love drinking."

These letters and circulars brought unity among them and they achieved success in choosing their king unanimously to face the Arabian invasions.

### **Conquest of Anbâr**

The Persians collected a big force in Anbâr and appointed Sherzâd, the ruler of Sâbât as its commander. Khâlid ❀ marched from Hirah to Anbâr. Sherzâd had erected a high mound of clay outside the ramparts of their fort to consolidate his position. When Khâlid ❀ surrounded Anbâr, the besieged soldiers showered arrows on the Muslim army with the result that the eyes of about one thousand Muslim fighters were injured. But the lion-hearted commander of the Muslim forces was not to be intimidated through such tactics and devices. He outsmarted his enemy by slaughtering the weak and exhausted camels and piling them up to reach the ramparts and then beat the enemy thoroughly. Although the Persians showed courage and gallantry, they had to surrender before the Muslims who outwitted them in every department of warfare. When Sherzâd witnessed that Muslim victory was around the corner, he sent his men to Khâlid ❀ on peace mission. He replied that he could allow Sherzâd to leave the city peacefully along with a few comrades with provisions for not more than three days. Sherzâd left the city and Khâlid ❀ entered it victoriously. He then put Zabrqân bin Badr in charge of Anbâr and marched to Ain-ut-Tamr.

### **Conquest of Ain-ut-Tamr**

Uqbah bin Uqbah heard of the advancement of Muslim troops and contacted the Persian Commander Mehrân bin Bahrâm to say that



only Arabs knew the war tactics of the Arabs, so they (Uqbah's men) should be allowed to confront the Muslim forces. Mehrân was happy enough to give his consent to this proposal. Uqbah was too excited to come out first and challenge for a duel. Khâlid ﷺ stepped forward and captured him alive, with the result his men fled in terror and were also taken captive. Mehrân bin Bahrâm grew so awe-stricken that he fled his fort, which later fell to the Muslim army.

### **Upper Iraq**

Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ finished his task in a comparatively short period but Iyâd bin Ghanam ﷺ dispatched about the same time, was still engaged on his mission. His target of attack was a large territory forming part of Iraq, Iran and Syria and so his combats affected Persia and Heraclius equally. The time when Khâlid ﷺ conquered Ain-ut-Tamr, Iyâd engaged the rulers of Dumat-ul-Jandal after winning victories over the polytheists and Christian tribes. Dumat-ul-Jandal had two rulers, Ukaidir bin Mâlik and Judi bin Rabi'ah, who had collected all the Christians of the surrounding areas against the Muslims. In this distressing situation, Iyâd ﷺ addressed a letter to Khâlid ﷺ, who was then at Ain-ut-Tamr, to come to his help against the huge army of the enemy.

### **Conquest of Dumat-ul-Jandal**

Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ appointed Qa'qâ' bin Amr ﷺ his deputy in Hirah and proceeded to Dumat-ul-Jandal without loss of a moment. The burning news of Khâlid's arrival was so terrifying that Ukaidir counseled Judi to make peace with the Muslims but he and other Christian chiefs rejected the proposal outright. At last Ukaidir broke his relations with them and left alone for some unknown place. A small column of the Muslims intercepted him on the way and he died fighting. Khâlid ﷺ launched his attack from another side and challenged the enemy commander for a duel. Judi stepped forward and was captured by Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ in no time, with the result his men fled the battleground. Simultaneously, Iyâd bin Ghanam ﷺ also prevailed over his Christian opponents and made them flee for their lives.

## **The Battle of Husaid**

When the Persians noticed that Khâlid bin Walid ؓ was away from Hirah, they made an all-out effort to take back the province and turn out the Muslim administrators from the territory. The Arabian tribes also lent their support to avenge the killing of their chief, Uqbah bin Uqbah. Two well-known Persian generals Zarmahr and Rozbah marched at the head of a huge army. Qa'qâ' bin Amr ؓ, the deputy of Khâlid ؓ in Hirah, also divided his force in two parts, under Abu Laila ؓ and himself and challenged the enemy at Husaid.

After a heavy fight, both the generals and more than half of their army fell to the Muslim assault. The rest of their men fled to Khanâfis where their commander Bahbudhân was lying with a large army. When Abu Laila ؓ reached Khanâfis in pursuit of the fugitives, Bahbudhân fled to Mudaiyah where Hudhail bin Imrân along with other Arabian chiefs were awaiting the opportunity to engage the Muslims in a battle. In the meantime, Khâlid bin Walid ؓ finished his task in Dumat-ul-Jandal and hurried back to Hirah.

## **The Battle of Mudaiyah**

Khâlid ؓ took over the command of the entire Muslim army and divided it in three parts to attack from three different sides. Qa'qâ', Abu Laila and Khâlid ؓ himself attacked from three sides as already decided upon. Hudhail fled for his life but the other generals along with a large number of men were put to death. Among the persons killed were Abdul-Uzza bin Abu Ruhm and Labid bin Jarir who sided with the opponents of Islam under compulsion in spite of being Muslims.

When Abu Bakr ؓ came to know of this, he paid blood money to their relatives and ordered to treat their children well. Umar ؓ was already angry with Khâlid ؓ on account of Mâlik bin Nuwairah's assassination, and this incident added fuel to the flames. However, Abu Bakr ؓ did not seek any explanation from Khâlid bin Walid ؓ and exonerated him with the remark: "Anyone who accompanies the polytheists will meet with the same calamity."

## The Battle of Firâd

Firâd was the meeting-ground of Persia, Syria and Arabia, and was adjacent to Dumat-ul-Jandal. It was the place where Banu Taghlib, Banu Namir and Banu Iyyâd had already collected and the Roman army was camping nearby to back them. Now the series of battles fought with the Persian forces in the lower areas of Iraq had reached the Roman camp.

Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ arrived at Firâd to give battle. The Roman army was across the river Euphrates and sent a message to the Muslim commander to either cross the river or let them cross it. Khâlid ﷺ asked them to cross the river and they did. Now both the forces were facing each other on the same side of the river. The Muslim army was extremely exhausted on account of the continuous travelling and fighting while the Romans were fresh and about eight or ten-fold more in number. However, the battle broke out and went on the whole day. At last the Romans fled the field tasting their worst defeat and leaving behind one hundred thousand dead. After finishing this job, Khâlid ﷺ sent his army back to Hirah and he himself left secretly for Makkah to perform Hajj in the company of only a few persons.

After the Hajj, Khâlid ﷺ hurried back to Hirah. But the news of his journey to Makkah could not be kept secret and it gradually reached the ears of Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ. He, however, asked Khâlid ﷺ not to repeat it in future and expressed his displeasure over this act of carelessness.

Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ stayed in Hirah up to Rabi' Al-Awwal 13 AH, which he had entered in Muharram 12 AH. During this period he faced his enemies at every step and fought scores of fierce battles against formidable armies outnumbering Islamic forces in every battle but beating them thoroughly in each one and never tasting defeat in any battle. The Roman and Persian powers used to be shuddered from within at the mention of Khâlid bin Walid's name.

Human history can not perhaps, give any other example of so many successive victories in so short a period with so little resources. But Khâlid ﷺ did it. He deserves all of the blessings of Allâh that we can

seek for him and for his matchless military acumen, dauntless courage, unflinching determination and daring operations.

However, we can not ignore the spirit behind all his deeds of wonder and the spirit is that of his selection, training and guidance in Siddiqi style and manner. Muslim columns and troops wherever they fought and whatever lines of operation they adopted were as per the instructions given from Al-Madinah, the headquarters of Islam. In all situations and circumstances, the Caliph of the Prophet ﷺ kept himself acquainted with the details of the movements of the Muslim forces and never made any delay in sending the instructions best-suited to the situation.

### **Khâlid bin Walid ؓ in Syria**

The military operations of Khâlid not only uprooted the apostasy from Arabia but also took away from the Persians the courage to invade Al-Madinah as part of their strategy. Now the first and the most important issue that demanded their immediate attention was the Syrian front under the Romans and the Ghassanids. Shurahbil bin Amr, the Ghassani king had martyred the emissary of the Prophet ﷺ, which led to the battle of Mu'tah. Besides, the joint forces of the Romans and the Gassanids were ready to invade Al-Madinah and the Prophet ﷺ himself went up to Tabuk to ward off their evil intentions. Again, the news of huge military preparations at the Syrian borders led the Prophet ﷺ to send an army under the command of Usâmah bin Zaid ؓ. Even in the thick of military actions against the apostates the Caliph could not afford to ignore the Syrian threat and sent Khâlid ؓ to deal with the Syrians.

Khâlid bin Walid ؓ left the headquarters with a small column but he took within him, according to the Caliph's instructions, Muslim fighters from the regions and territories that were on his way. Despite this, Khâlid ؓ was instructed to avoid direct encounter with the Christian army. Internal problems of Arabia and the issue of apostasy topped his list.

When Heraclius came to know of the presence of the Muslim army within the bounds of Syria, he incited the surrounding tribes and the

notables of the area against the Muslims. At last Heraclius made Mâhân, a well-known Roman general, go ahead with a huge army. As a result of the encounter, the troops under Mâhân tasted ignominious defeat besides leaving a large quantity of booty. Informed of this defeat, Heraclius himself proceeded from Constantinople, came to Syria and collected a huge army to avenge the defeat.

Khâlid sent a detailed account of the state of affairs to the Caliph. The day the letter was received in Al-Madinah, was the day when Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl returned to Al-Madinah after his arduous campaigns. At this time, tribes and clans from all over Arabia were pouring into the headquarters with the sole purpose of laying down their lives in the way of Allâh.

Siddiq ﷺ sent Ikrimah ﷺ to assist Khâlid ﷺ in his campaign. Close on his heels was dispatched Amr bin Al-Âs ﷺ with a detachment to help Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ by targeting the Romans in route to Palestine. As a follow-up action, the Caliph sent a detachment of tribes from various parts of Arabia under the command of Yazid bin Abu Sufyân with instructions to invade Damascus.

One more detachment headed by Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ was dispatched to attack Hims. He sent yet another detachment headed by Shurahbil bin Hasanah ﷺ, after he returned to Al-Madinah from his campaign in Iraq, to launch an attack from the side of Jordan. These four strong detachments went to attack Syria from four sides. This campaign took place in Muharram 13 AH.

When all the four detachments crossed into Syria, and Heraclius came to know that the Muslim force has divided itself in four groups to attack four positions, he also made four groups of his army to be commanded by four generals. He sent his full brother, Tadhâraq at the head of 90 thousand armed men to face Amr bin Al-Âs ﷺ in Palestine. Jurjah bin Budhiyah was given 40 thousand soldiers to combat Yazid bin Abu Sufyân in Damascus. General Râqis was dispatched with an army of 50 thousand men to fight with Shurahbil bin Hasanah ﷺ in Jordan and Rafiqah bin Nasturas was asked to take on Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ in Hims with 60 thousand men under his command.

Thus, he collected two hundred and 40 thousand troops strong to go to war against the Muslims, who were altogether 30 thousand in number. It makes it clear what kind of major preparations, Heraclius had undertaken to rout the Muslim forces. Although Heraclius was wise enough to avoid the battle, his courtiers, nobles and chiefs were adamant in their ambition to invade Arabia.

Although the Muslim generals were making separate movements, each of them was bound by the Caliph's order to keep close contact and be aware of one another's state of affairs. When the Muslim commanders entered Syrian territory, they found to their amazement that for each Muslim detachment the enemy had eight times more forces. They took stock of the situation and informed Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ of what they were facing at the time and took a decision to jointly face the enemy. As the four Muslim generals assembled at Yarmuk, they received orders from the Caliph to face the enemy jointly.

Moreover, the Caliph sent orders to Khâlid ؓ to rush to the spot of danger with half of the troops and put Muthanna bin Hârithah ؓ in Hira' with the other half. He was also commanded to take charge of the joint command as the supreme commander. With the receipt of these orders from headquarters, Khâlid bin Walid ؓ, the Sword of Allâh, hurried to Syria with a contingent of ten thousand soldiers leaving an equal number in Hira'.

Following the Muslim strategy, Heraclius also ordered his commanders to form a united front. His full brother Tadhâraq headed the huge army of Heraclius. Besides, he dispatched a well-known general, Mâhân with a large detachment to strengthen the army arranged against the Muslim forces.

### **The Battle of Yarmuk**

Khâlid ؓ examined the situation like a seasoned commander. One night he sensed the enemy would attack the next morning, and that night he divided his army of about 40 to 46 thousand into small squads headed by separate commanders of high caliber, keeping a small but selected squad for his own company. He then instructed the head of every squad about the strategy to be followed.

The Romans proceeded with the attack with a contingent of 40 thousand soldiers, which was immediately repulsed. Next came the noted Roman general Jurjah bin Budhiyah with his column and expressed his desire to talk to Khâlid bin Walid ؓ. When Khâlid ؓ moved near to him, he wished to know about Islam, which the Muslim commander did adequately. He embraced Islam on the spot and moved along with Khâlid ؓ to become a part of the Muslim army. He then fought against the Romans gallantly and then fell martyred.

Both the armies were locked together in a fierce fight. Although the Muslim army was deficient in number, it was more than a match for the Romans in courage and vitality. Their fervor was so high that even women plunged into the battlefield to prove their mettle as fighters for Islam. Abu Sufyân ؓ was encouraging the Muslim soldiers with his martial songs. Mean while Ikrimah ؓ cried out: "Who are they to promise me about death?" Dirâr bin Azwar ؓ and other four hundred men pledged their allegiance at the time on either being martyred or victorious on the battlefield. Following this, the entire party fell on the Roman army like hungry tigers. Miqdâd ؓ was reciting aloud Verses of *Sûrat Al-Anfâl* to produce in them the spirit of martyrdom.

The brave sons of Islam Khâlid bin Walid, Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrâh, Shurahbil bin Hasanah, Yazid bin Abu Sufyân, Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl, Qa'qâ' bin Amr, Abu Sufyân, Abud-Darda, Amr bin Âs, Hârith bin Dirâr and Jurjah bin Budhiyah ؓ performed such deeds of valor that have never been witnessed before. From morning to evening swords and daggers, arrows and spears remained in action. *Zuhr* (noon) and *Asr* (afternoon) prayers were performed only symbolically while the fighting was going on. The day drew to an end but not the battle. Exhausted with the day-long operations and frustrated with failure after failure, the Romans lost heart and began to retreat till they had the mountain at their back, while the Muslims kept advancing and pushing them back till they started to flee. The pursuing Muslim troops forced them into the river, many were drowned, and others fell to their death. In this way, one hundred and thirty thousand soldiers were killed. The rest fled for their lives.

The morning sun rose with the message of Muslim victory and the Roman soldiers were nowhere to be seen. Tadhâraq, the Roman commander and full brother of Heraclius was killed along with a few other generals. Three thousand Muslims were honored with martyrdom. Among the martyrs the names of Jurjah bin Budhiyah, Ikrimah bin Abu Jahl, Amr bin Ikrimah, Salamah bin Hishâm, Amr bin Saeed, Abân bin Saeed, Hishâm bin Al-Âs, Habbâr bin Sufyân and Tufail bin Amr ؓ were of those well known.

The battle of Yarmuk is stated to have been fought in Rabi' Al-Awwal or Rabi' Al-Âkhir 13 AH. However, this does not appear to be correct. The battle of Yarmuk must have taken place by the end of Jumada Al-Ukhra. The Muslim troops had conquered Busra before the Roman army reached Yarmuk. Moreover, the news of the conquest of Yarmuk had not reached Al-Madinah until after the death of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ. It is impossible that the news of the Muslim victory in Yarmuk would have taken two or two-and-a-half months to reach Al-Madinah.

### **Death of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ**

The battle of Yarmuk in Syria had left Heraclius bewildered for he could not reason the crushing defeat of several hundred thousand armored Roman troops at the hands of a handful of Muslims. Dejected and embarrassed, he left Hims and proceeded to some unknown place. However, before his departure, he laid stress on strengthening the forts of Damascus and Hims. Damascus had come under the siege of the Muslim army and the entire land of Syria was about to be captured by them. Now, instead of looking towards Arabia, they were anticipating their own death and destruction. The green and fertile land of Iraq had already come to the Muslim fold. Islamic rule was now engaged in expanding Arabian territory by pushing the Persians and Romans back.

At the beginning of Jumada Al-Ukhra 13 AH, Abu Bakr ؓ caught a fever and its intensity continued unabated for a fortnight. When he grew sure of his last hours drawing near, he sent for Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf ؓ and held consultation with him regarding the caliphate and said, "What's your opinion about Umar?" He replied, "He is very



strict and severe in his treatment and behavior." Thereupon Abu Bakr ؓ said, "His strictness was simply due to my softness. I have myself examined that Umar was inclined to adopt a hard-line in matters I happened to be polite about, but he always turned soft when he found me strict. I think the caliphate will make him soft and moderate in his opinion and approach." Following this, he called Uthmân bin Affân ؓ and put the same question to him. He said in reply, "Umar's internal self is better than his external one; he is superior to us all."

When Ali ؓ was consulted, he made almost the same answer. Then came Talhah ؓ and when Abu Bakr ؓ said to him, "I would like to appoint Umar as the caliph of the Muslims." He said, "What answer will you give to Allâh the Almighty about what you have done to the people you ruled over?" In response to this he said, "I shall answer Allâh the Almighty that I have appointed the best of Your creatures as caliph for Your creatures." Having heard this, Talhah ؓ kept silent. Abu Bakr ؓ asked Uthmân ؓ to put down his will, which is given below.

"This is the pledge which I, the caliph of the Messenger of Allâh ؐ have made at a time when his last hour in this world is at hand and the first hour of the Hereafter is approaching fast. In such a state, even a disbeliever comes to believe and a transgressor too attains conviction. I have appointed Umar bin Al-Khattâb to be your caliph, and I have never fallen short of your expectation in doing good for you all. Thus, if Umar takes to justice and endurance, it is quite within my knowledge; if he commits anything wrong, I am unaware of the unseen. What I have decided upon is nothing but good. Everybody has to face the consequences of his deeds."

"Those who have wronged will come to know by what overturning they will be overturned." (26:227)

### **Last Address of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ**

When the piece of writing was completed, Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ asked it to be read out to the people. Following this he came out in spite of his precarious health condition and said addressing this audience:

"I have not appointed any relative of mine as caliph, and I have not installed Umar as caliph on my own. I have rather done it only after holding consultations with men of sound judgment. Are you then agreed to his being your caliph?" Hearing this they said, "We all agree with your choice and opinion." Following this he said, "You should then carry out Umar's orders and obey him."

All the people declared their allegiance. Abu Bakr ﷺ then said addressing Umar ﷺ in the presence of the audience:

"O Umar! I have made you my deputy for the Companions of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ; keep fearing Allāh from within and without. O Umar! There are some rights of Allāh the Almighty related to night, which he does not accede to in the day; similarly, some are the rights related to day, which He does not accede to in the night. Allāh the Almighty does not accept *Nawāfil* (supererogatory prayers) unless *Fard* (obligatory prayers) are performed. O Umar! Those alone get salvation on the Day of Judgment, whose record of deeds will be weighty, while the deficient in virtuous deeds will suffer. O Umar! The ways to success and salvation are found by following the Noble Qur'ān and what is right. O Umar! Don't you know that the Verses relating to inducement and awe, warning and glad tidings are revealed in the Noble Qur'ān simultaneously so that a believer keeps fearing Allāh the Almighty and seeking His forgiveness. O Umar! Whenever you find in the Noble Qur'ān mention of men of Hell, pray to Allāh not to make you one of them; whenever you find mention of men of Paradise, pray to Allāh to make you one of them. O Umar! When you will follow these counsels of mine you will find me sitting beside you."

This piece of writing and will-making were all done by Monday, 22 Jumada Al-Ukhra, 13 AH, and between the night of Jumada Al-Ukhra 22nd and 23rd, after sunset he breathed his last and was buried before the *Ishā* (night prayer) or at any time of the night.

His caliphate spanned over two-and-a-half years. Attāb bin Usaïd ﷺ, the governor of Makkah died the same day in Makkah.

The day Abu Bakr ﷺ wrote his will and informed the Muslims that the end of his life was near, Muthanna bin Hārithah ﷺ returned to Al-Madinah from Hirah (Iraq). When Khālid ﷺ proceeded from Hirah to Syria along with half of the army leaving Muthanna ﷺ there with the other half, the Persian general, Bihman Jādhwaih thought that it would be easy for them to drive out the Muslims from Hirah. Thus, he set out with a strong army. Muthanna bin Hārithah ﷺ marched from Hirah to Babylon and repulsed his attack, chased them up to Madā'in and then came back to Hirah.

In the wake of this ignominious and devastating defeat, the Persian generals, ministers, nobles and chiefs buried their old differences and rose together to avenge their defeat. A wave of fervor and courage rose across the entire country. All the Persian tribes and chiefs of the nation rose up to uproot the Muslims. Such a large-scale military preparation worried Muthanna ﷺ who hurried to Al-Madinah to acquaint the Caliph with the impending threat leaving Hirah in the charge of Bashir bin Khasāsiah ﷺ.

Muthanna ﷺ reached Al-Madinah only a few hours before the final departure of the Caliph. However, the Caliph heard him with rapt attention and instructed Umar ﷺ to do the needful. When Umar ﷺ went out, Abu Bakr ﷺ said:

"O Allāh! I have chosen Umar as caliph after me for the welfare of the Muslims as a whole and to remove all sorts of dangers from their path. You know very well the feelings of all hearts. After holding consultations with the Muslims, I have selected the best among the Muslims to take care of them and look after their peace and welfare. Make the guardians of Your slaves trustworthy and firm for their lives, their safety is in Your Hand. Make Umar a good caliph and his people be a benefit for him."

### **Impressions of Ali ﷺ**

As the soul-shattering news of Abu Bakr's death spread in Al-Madinah, the whole city plunged into deep grief and untold woes and turmoil. The dismal day of the Prophet's final departure cast its tragic

reflection once again. When Ali ؑ heard this sad news he burst into tears, came to his house weeping and uttered at his door the following words immersed in deep sorrow and profound pain:

"O Abu Bakr! May Allāh show mercy to you. By Allāh you believed first of all in the entire *Ummah* and made your belief the base of your behavior and manners. You were the man excellent in trust and conviction, the most generous and the greatest caretaker of the Prophet ﷺ. You were the greatest supporter of Islam and well-wisher of all creatures. In manners, virtues and guidance you were close to the Prophet ﷺ most of all. May Allāh confer on you the best reward on behalf of Islam and the Muslims. You affirmed the Prophet ﷺ when others denied him; you showed sympathy when others were ungenerous to him; you rose to help the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ when others held themselves back from help and support. Allāh entitled you as *Siddiq* (the Truthful) in His Book:

'And he who brought the truth and believed there in.' (39:33)

You stood like a rock in support of Islam and drove away the disbelievers. Neither your argument was ever misdirected nor your insight weakened; your soul never showed timidity. You were firm like a mountain; strong winds failed to uproot or stir you. About you the Prophet ﷺ had said: 'Weak in body, strong in Faith, humble, exalted by Allāh, venerable on earth and worthy among the believers.' Nobody could show greed in your presence nor could give free expression to his desires; the weak happened to be strong to you and the strong weak till the right of the weak was given to him and the strong was forced to give what was due."

When Umar ؓ heard this news he expressed his deep feelings in the following words:

"O Caliph of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, you put your people to great hardship with your departure. It is hard enough to be on a par with even your dust. How can I vie with you?"

## **Governors of the Siddiqi Caliphate**

The Trustee of the believers, Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrâh ؓ was in charge as public exchequer, Umar ؓ looked after the Department of Justice and Uthmân and Ali ؓ were entrusted with the administrative work and correspondences. In the absence of one, the next would take over the responsibility. Attâb bin Usaid ؓ was the governor of Makkah who passed away the day Abu Bakr ؓ breathed his last. The governor of Tâ'if was Uthmân bin Abul-Âs ؓ. San'â' was governed by Muhâjir bin Umayyah ؓ and Hadramout by Ziyâd bin Labid ؓ. Khaulân province was governed by Ya'la bin Umayyah ؓ, Yemen by Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ, Janad by Mu'âdh bin Jabal ؓ, Bahrain by Ala' bin Hadrami ؓ, Dumat-ul-Jandal by Iyâd bin Ghanam ؓ and Iraq by Muthanna bin Hârithah ؓ. Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrâh ؓ was later sent to Syria as the commander of the Muslim forces, while Yazid bin Abu Sufyân, Amr bin Al-Âs, Shurahbil bin Hasanah ؓ were already engaged in Syria as commanders of various Muslim detachments. Khâlid bin Walid ؓ was the commander-in-chief of the Muslim army during the Siddiqi Caliphate.

## **Wives and Children**

Abu Bakr's first wife was Qutailah bint Abdul-Uzza who gave birth to Abdullah bin Abu Bakr ؓ followed by Asma' bint Abu Bakr ؓ, the mother of Abdullah bin Zubair ؓ. From Umm Rumân ؓ, the second wife, were born Abdur-Rahmân bin Abu Bakr and Âishah Siddiqah ؓ. When Abu Bakr ؓ was converted to, Islam his first wife refused to follow suit and was immediately divorced. The second-wife, Umm Rumân ؓ accepted Islam. After being converted to Islam, Abu Bakr married Asma'a bint Umais ؓ, the widow of Ja'far bin Abu Tâlib ؓ, who gave birth to Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ and then he married Habibah bint Khârijah Ansâriyah ؓ who belonged to the Khazraj. From her was born to him a daughter named Umm Kulthum after his death.

## Umar bin Al-Khattâb ❀

### Birth and Pedigree:

He was among the nobles of the Quraish. During the Days of Ignorance, diplomatic missions were attached to his family. In the event of the Quraish being at war with any tribe, his family's leaders would be sent on peacekeeping missions. They also took the lead when there was occasion to highlight greatness and superiority of the Quraish over others. His family lineage is as follows: Umar bin Khattâb bin Nufail bin Abdul-Uzza bin Riyâh bin Abdullah bin Qurat bin Razâh bin Adi bin Ka'b bin Luai. Ka'b had two sons, Adi and Murrah. Murrah was among the ancestors of the Prophet ﷺ. Some eight generations back the ancestry of the Prophet ﷺ and Umar ❀ becomes common. Umar's filial appellation was Abu Hafs while the Prophet ﷺ gave him the title of 'Fâruq'. He was born 40 years before the migration of the Prophet ﷺ. He passed his childhood days in grazing camels. After attaining youth, according to Arabian tradition, he was instructed in genealogy, swordsmanship, horsemanship and wrestling. He adopted trade as his profession before and after converting to Islam.

### Some Specific Excellences:

Before being converted to Islam Umar Fâruq ❀ used to enter into wrestling matches in the arena of Ukaz where a grand annual fair was held so that the followers of different arts might gather from all parts of Arabia and display their respective abilities. This justifies the inference that Umar had attained perfection in the art of wrestling. His claim to equestrian skill is also well established. Umar ❀ used to literally jump on to his horse's back and his seat was so firm that he appeared to be a part of the horse he rode. At the time of the advent of the Prophet ﷺ, as per *Futuh-ul-Buldân*, there were only seventeen persons in the whole clan of Quraish who could read and write, and Umar ❀, the son of Khattâb, was one of them. He joined the ranks of Islam after forty men and eleven women who were remaining in Makkah after the migration to Abyssinia. According to other

narratives, he came to the fold of Islam after thirty-nine men and twenty-three women or forty-five men and eleven women. He was one of the earliest believers and among the blessed ten. He was also the father-in-law of the Prophet ﷺ. He is counted among the scholars and pious Companions. He has narrated 539 *Ahadiith* in all which have been reproduced by Uthmān, Ali, Talhah, Sa'd, Ibn Mas'ud, Abu Dhar, Abdullah bin Umar, Abdullah bin Abbās, Abdullah bin Zubair, Anas, Abu Hurairah, Amr bin Ās, Abu Musa Ash'ari, Barā' bin Āzib, Abu Saeed Khudri and others.

Ibn Abbās relates that the day Umar Fāruq accepted Islam, the polytheists said, "Today the Muslims have settled their score with us." The same day the following Verse was revealed:

"O Prophet! Allāh is sufficient for you and for the believers who follow you." (8:64)

Ibn Mas'ud is reported to have said: "The day Umar accepted Islam, it continued to grow in honor. It was, in fact, a conquest for Islam, and his *Hijrah* (migration) was a real victory, and his leadership was a blessing. We did not have courage enough to perform our *Salāt* (prayers) at the Holy Ka'bah until after Umar accepted Islam. He made the disbelievers the target of so much pressure, encounters and fightings that they, at last, yielded in allowing us to offer our prayers at the Ka'bah." Hudhaifah is reported to have said: "When Umar accepted the Faith, Islam rose like a fortunate person making progress at every step, and it continued retreating with his martyrdom and its fortune was on the decline."

Ibn Sa'd and Suhaib bin Sinān Rumi reported: "Islam came to the fore when Umar accepted Faith and we became able to sit around the Ka'bah, and pay them in the same coin." Ibn Asākir reports Ali to have said: "Everyone migrated secretly, but, when Umar decided to migrate, he took an unsheathed sword in one hand and arrows in another and put his bow across his shoulders, and went to the Ka'bah. He went around it seven times followed by two *Rakāt* of *Salāt* (units of prayer) at the Station of Ibrahim. He then came to the circle of the chiefs of the Quraish and said throwing a challenge at them, 'May you be disgraced! Whoever likes to see his mother without a son and wife

without a husband, should face me.' But none of them moved from their place."

Imam Nawawi reported: Umar ﷺ accompanied the Prophet ﷺ in every battle and kept firm on the day of Uhud. The Prophet ﷺ once said, "I had a dream that a woman was performing *Wudu'* (ablution) in Paradise sitting beside a palace. I inquired whose palace this was. I was told that it belonged to Umar." Then turning towards Umar ﷺ he said, "The same moment your sense of honor came to my mind and I went away from there." Hearing this, Umar ﷺ burst into tears and submitted, "Shall I show my sense of honor to you?" The Prophet ﷺ once said, "I dreamt that I took milk and its freshness reached up to my nails. I then gave the rest to Umar." "What is the interpretation of this dream, O Prophet of Allāh?" they asked. "Milk here means Knowledge," the Prophet ﷺ explained. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Once I had a dream that people were brought before me in their shirts, some wearing them up to their chests, and some of them longer than this but Umar's shirt was dragging." "What's meant by the shirt?" they asked. "Religion," he explained.

On one occasion the Prophet ﷺ said to Umar ﷺ: "By Allāh, Satan will never tread the way you pass through." The Prophet ﷺ once said: "Had there been a Prophet after me, he would have been Umar." He once said: "Umar is the lamp of the heavenly people." On one occasion the Prophet ﷺ remarked: "The door to things useless and futile will remain closed while Umar lives among you." He ﷺ once said: "Every angel of the heaven pays respects to Umar and every devil on earth fears him." *Ahadith* from Abu Saeed Khudri ﷺ let us know that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Each one of the Prophets had a *Muhaddith*, if there could be a *Muhaddith* in my *Ummah*, he is Umar." On being asked about the *Muhaddith*, he said: "One from whose tongue angels speak."

On one occasion Abu Bakr ﷺ said: "None is dearer to me than Umar." Ali ﷺ is reported to have once remarked: "While mentioning pious people, never forget Umar." Ibn Umar ﷺ is reported to have said: "After the Prophet ﷺ, we found Umar to be the most intelligent." Ibn Mas'ud ﷺ said: "If knowledge of the entire world is put on one scale, and that of Umar on the other to be weighed, Umar's



will have the heavier weight." Hudhaifah ؓ says: "Knowledge of the whole world lies in the lap of Umar." He further said: "None has dared to receive as much censure in the way of Allāh as Umar did." Ali ؓ once saw Umar ؓ wrapped in a piece of cloth and remarked: "None is dearer to me than the one who is now wrapped in a cloth." On being asked, Ali ؓ remarked: "Umar is full of firm resolve, consciousness and courage." Ibn Mas'ud ؓ is reported to have said: "Umar's excellence is established by four things: firstly, he counseled the killing of the captives of the battle of Badr which was followed by the Verse: 'Were it not a previous ordainment from Allāh, a severe torment would have touched you for what you took.' (8:68) Secondly, he asked the Mothers of the believers to observe *Hijāb* and then the Verse concerning *Hijāb* was revealed and the Prophet ﷺ said to Umar: 'Revelation is caused in my house and you were already inspired.' Thirdly, the Prophet's praying to Allāh for strengthening Islam by causing Umar to accept Islam; fourthly, he pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr before anyone did." Mujāhid said: "We would so often mention that the devils remained in confinement during the caliphate of Umar and got freedom after his death." Abu Usāmah ؓ said: "Do you know who were Abu Bakr and Umar? They were like mother and father for Islam." Ja'far Sādiq ؓ said: "I am rather disgusted with him who remembers not Abu Bakr and Umar gracefully."

### Physical Features of Umar ؓ:

He was fair-complexioned inclined to redness. He was so tall that he appeared to be riding while walking on foot. His cheeks were deficient in flesh; beard was thick, moustache noticeable and baldness in the frontal part of the head. Ibn Asākir relates: "Umar was tall and solid with color inclined to redness, cheeks pressed, moustache noticeable with a red halo. His mother was the sister of Abu Jahl and hence Umar ؓ called him maternal uncle."

### **Important Events of the Fāruqī Caliphate**

The Muslims at large took *Bai'ah* (oath of allegiance) at the hand of Umar ؓ in Al-Madinah on Tuesday, 23rd of Jumada Al-Ukhra, 13 AH. Abu Bakr ؓ had issued the following instructions to Umar ؓ

after the arrival of Muthanna ؓ on 22nd of Jumada Al-Ukhra, 13 AH, and hearing from him the account of affairs:

"I am sure to pass away today. Thus, you will dispatch Muthanna for fighting tomorrow before the end of the day. No suffering whatsoever should hold you back from carrying out the religious tasks and the Commands of Allāh the Almighty. You have seen what I did after the death of the Prophet ﷺ even though it was the greatest calamity for us. When the Syrians are conquered, make it a point to send back the Iraqis to Iraq for they know their own business very well and they are at ease only in Iraq."

The above words make it amply clear that from the day the Prophet ﷺ made his final departure to the day of his own last journey, every moment of his life was devoted to Divine duties. He made no will concerning his wives and children.

After accepting the oath of allegiance for his caliphate, Umar ؓ aroused in the people the fervor for taking part in *Jihād*, but they made no response and this state of indecision continued for three days. Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud Thaqafi ؓ offered his name for Iraq on the fourth day. He was then followed by Sa'd bin Ubaid Ansāri ؓ, then by Sulait bin Qais ؓ and many others. Thus was formed a large detachment for Iraq. Umar ؓ appointed Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud ؓ as commander for he was the first to show his readiness. He accompanied Muthanna ؓ to Iraq. The three-day silence of the people over joining the Iraqi detachment led the historians to think that the people were unmoved because they were unhappy over the dismissal of Khālid bin Walid ؓ by Umar ؓ when he took charge of the caliphate.

However, this is a wrong and baseless notion. Nobody opposed the step taken by Umar ؓ. Moreover, no historian has ever mentioned the unhappiness of the people and how this unhappiness was resolved. This is rather derogatory to the high status and pious position that the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ enjoyed. It is a fact that almost every one of them was always inclined to fight in the way of Allāh. However, each of them was waiting for the other to take

upon himself the responsibility of the campaign. The reason given by these historians does not hold true and is illogical because the people were encouraged to join the campaign and their initial lack of response occurred before Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ was deposed as commander.

### **Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ deposed**

Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ had sent Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ to Syria as the supreme commander of the Muslim army. He was a warrior of the very highest caliber and matchless as a commander. Khâlid ﷺ was also the commander-in-chief in Iraq at the same time. His amazing valor and military acumen had left the Persian Court and Sassanid Empire shocked and bewildered. The Roman Empire also needed the same treatment, therefore, Abu Bakr ﷺ had sent him to the Syrian front as the commander-in-chief of the Muslim army, and his decision proved to be right. He gave them such a crushing defeat on the battlefield of Yarmuk that the Roman Empire's back was broken. Now the time had come for a decisive battle between the two forces and so the Muslim army was urgently in need of a commander not only well-versed in the art of warfare but also a statesman of wide experience and broad vision.

Umar Fâruq ﷺ did not disapprove of Khâlid's martial abilities. However, he considered him a little careless and was, therefore, apprehensive that his lack of caution could possibly cause the Muslims a set back. Abu Bakr Siddiq ﷺ also shared the anxiety of Umar Fâruq ﷺ. However, he, considered Khâlid ﷺ as the most suitable for the initial campaigns in Syria and Iraq. To him as a whole, his strong points were more than the weak ones. But, since, this purpose had already been achieved, his continuation as the supreme commander was no longer necessary. Umar Fâruq ﷺ used to say: "May Allâh the Almighty show mercy to Abu Bakr, he sheltered the command of Khâlid bin Walid, for he instructed me during his last hours about the commanders fighting along with Khâlid in Iraq but uttered not a word about Khâlid."

It is then clear that the steps taken by Umar ﷺ were not against the will of Abu Bakr ﷺ. Besides, the very first act of Umar ﷺ could not

have negated the policy of the Caliph whom he held in the highest esteem after the Prophet ﷺ. Historians generally miss the point that Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ had taken permission from Usamah ؓ to keep Umar Fâruq ؓ with him solely to seek his advice in state affairs, and this enviable position Umar ؓ enjoyed till the last breath of the departed Caliph.

But those who happen to have a superficial look over the matter, attach wrong meaning to it. Umar ؓ objected to some of Khâlid's careless acts and decisions no doubt, but his disapproval never made him cross the limits of *Shari'ah* (Divine codes). The man who gave free expression to his will that everyone among the captives of the battle of Badr be killed by his own relative could not be accused of nourishing a personal grudge against anybody. This is a calumny of the worst nature against the tower of righteousness that Umar ؓ was.

By deposing Khâlid bin Walid ؓ, Umar Fâruq ؓ has set a shining example of preferring Faith to this material world of ours. Khâlid ؓ accepted the orders of his deposition without question and continued to serve the new commander. Whenever the question of devaluing one's own self-importance for the sake of Divine service will be raised, we have the name of Khâlid bin Walid ؓ to present. This exemplary supreme sacrifice of Khâlid bin Walid ؓ, the Sword of Allâh, far exceeds his amazing and soul-stirring deeds of valor and military genius in the battlefield where he was always victorious and never tasted defeat in his entire career as a warrior. Both his martial deeds and sense of Divinity and loyalty to the Chief of the believers are deeds of Khâlid bin Walid ؓ that we can all be proud of.

Some historians have argued a very delicate point that Khâlid bin Walid ؓ was deposed because Umar ؓ wanted to infuse in the mind of the believers that victories were achieved because of Allâh's help, and not through any commander however valiant and seasoned he might be. This viewpoint also lends support to the replacement of Muthanna bin Hârithah ؓ by Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud ؓ. The Muslim Ummah is sure to achieve its past glory in the world even today if such examples of unity, integrity, loyalty and sacrifice are followed.

Among the foremost military services of Umar Fâruq after assuming the caliphate was the deposition of Khâlid bin Walid as the supreme commander of the Muslim army in Syria and his replacement by Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrâh. The order was immediately obeyed. However, after handing over the charge of commander-in-chief of the Syrian army to Abu Ubaidah, under him Khâlid bin Walid displayed gallantry and military skill of such a high degree that historians are still wanting in words to describe them. He not only fought more efficiently and relentlessly under the command of Abu Ubaidah, he also gave him valuable and expert advice whenever needed. History has no other example to offer in the annals of military service to compare with what Khâlid bin Walid did as the deposed commander of the same army. It only happened simply because of a high sense of duty to Allâh, a deep love for His religion and a profound attachment to His slaves.

The next job the Caliph did was the installation of Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud as the commander-in-chief of the entire Muslim army in Iraq. The third order of the Chief of the believers came in the form of dispatching Ya'la bin Umayyah to Yemen to fulfil the last will of the Prophet to drive out every Jew and Christian from the soil of Arabia. It was not accomplished during the caliphate of Abu Bakr owing to the uprisings and attacks that needed immediate attention.

### **Banishment of the Najrân Christians**

Umar Fâruq asked Ya'la bin Umayyah to go to Yemen and tell the Christians of Najrân to leave the country and that they would be provided with land that was more fertile plus other facilities in Syria.

Some narrow-minded persons hold this banishment of the Christians as an unjust step. However, these people ignore the evil designs and conspiratorial activities of the Jews of Al-Madinah injurious to the Muslim cause. They overlook how they incited the Romans to invade Al-Madinah. The Christians of Najrân were playing the same role against the Muslims in that area. Since the Prophet was well-aware of the usurious and anti-Islamic activities of the Jews and the Christians of Al-Madinah and Najrân, he wanted them to be driven off Arabian soil lest their evil habits made inroads into the Muslim

society. The agreement signed by the Prophet ﷺ and the Najrân Christians included as one of the conditions that they would give up the practice of usury but they failed to implement it. Thus, they deserved such an extreme step by involving themselves in collaboration with the Romans on one hand and hatching conspiracies against the Muslims on the other. We so often come across in history books, newspapers and magazines how people have been or are now being exiled by the civilized nations forcing them to leave hearth and home, wealth and property, they are even indulged in the mass killings also on a very large scale. In comparison to these exiles and brutal killings, the exile of the Christians of Najrân was very humane.

### **Conquest of Damascus**

After a major defeat at the hands of the Muslim troops in the battle of Yarmuk, the Roman soldiers took to their heels and stopped only at Fihl. Heraclius shocked and disappointed issued fresh orders for the Roman soldiers to assemble again. Damascus was refortified and large reinforcements from Palestine and Hims were arranged. Nastas bin Nasturas was appointed the commander-in-chief of the Syrian forces. Mâhân, the governor of Damascus was already there.

The Muslim army was still in Yarmuk. Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrâh ﷺ dispatched the Iraqi detachment accompanied by Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ to Iraq under the command of Hâshim bin Utbah ﷺ as per the orders of the Caliph. He sent a contingent towards Fihl and the rest of the army was divided into a number of divisions. A column was sent under the command of Dhul-Kala' ﷺ to obstruct the movement of the Roman reinforcements from Hims to Damascus, and another column was sent to stop them marching from Palestine to Damascus. Abu Ubaidah ﷺ himself proceeded to Damascus at the head of the remaining troops. He conquered Ghutah before reaching Damascus and then laid a siege around the city in the last of Rajab 13 AH. Although the city contained a large garrison, the Romans could not muster enough courage to face the Muslims in the open. They had to take refuge in their strong fortifications and use defensive means of war. Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrâh ﷺ camped at Al-Jâbiah gate while Khâlid bin Walid ﷺ and Amr bin Al-Âs ﷺ moved towards Tuma

gate, and Shurahbil bin Hasanah and Yazid bin Abu Sufyân appeared respectively at Farâwis, and Saghir and Kisân gates. Thus, Damascus was besieged on all sides. At times the besieged Romans hurled stones through catapults and shot arrows at the Muslim soldiers, which were countered effectively and without delay. The siege dragged on for about six months. The reinforcements dispatched by Heraclius to Damascus were effectively intercepted by Dhul-Kala'. At last, the people of Damascus lost hope of Heraclius' help and their zeal for battle began to dissolve. Abu Ubaidah on being informed of their distress and despair, issued orders to all the commanders to launch a full-scale attack the next morning.

When the besieged Romans came to know of the next step of the Muslim army, a deputation appeared before Khâlid bin Walid at Tuma gate and sought peace, which the Muslim commander immediately granted and entered the city without any fight. The peace document written by Khâlid bin Walid is given below:

"Khâlid bin Walid has made concessions for the people of Damascus that they will be granted peace on the entry of the Islamic army into Damascus and their lives, properties and churches would remain safe and intact. Moreover, neither fortifications of the city nor the houses will be demolished nor any member of the Islamic force will be allowed to reside in any house. The Muslims and their Caliph will practice nothing but good to the people of Damascus while they keep paying the *Jiziyah* (tax)."

About the same time that Khâlid bin Walid entered the city with the peace agreement, other commanders and their men forced into the city through ladders and by breaking the gates open. Khâlid and Ubaidah came across each other in the middle of the city. Abu Ubaidah claimed that he had conquered the city with his sword while Khâlid argued that he had seized it through the process of peace.

Some narratives lend support to the view that even if the peace agreement was signed at the request of Mâhân, the governor of Damascus, he also wanted to see the might of the Muslim forces. If the



Muslim assault met with failure, their defensive efforts would continue not caring the least for the peace document with Khâlid bin Walid ؓ, but if the Muslim campaign was crowned with success and they made their entry by force, these documents would come to their rescue. When the two commanders met in the middle of the city, the question that came up was whether the city was peacefully seized or conquered by force. Some people argued the point that since Khâlid ؓ was simply a commander, he had no right to write a peace document when the commander-in-chief was there to take a final decision. However, Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrâh ؓ rejected this point by saying that if peace or shelter was provided even by an ordinary member of the army, it applied to everyone. He declared peace to prevail in the entire city according to the peace document of Khâlid ؓ and every point therein was handled with due care. The citizens of Damascus enjoyed perfect peace. Yazid bin Abu Sufyân ؓ was appointed as the governor of Damascus who not only brought peace to the city but let the Roman soldiers go at will.

## **The Battle of Fihl**

Providing Yazid bin Abu Sufyân ؓ with a strong contingent, Abu Ubaidah proceeded from Damascus to Fihl where Saqlar bin Mikhraq, the noted general of Heraclius was lying with a few hundred thousand soldiers. Before leaving Damascus, Abu Ubaidah ؓ had given the advance-guard to Khâlid bin Walid ؓ, the middle to Shurahbil bin Hasanah ؓ, the right wing to Amr bin Âs ؓ and lead the left wing himself, while Dirâr bin Azwar ؓ was given charge of the cavalry and Iyâd bin Ghanam ؓ that of the infantry. Every commander camped at the place of his own choice.

The Romans attacked the middle portion of the Muslim army in night. Shurahbil bin Hasanah ؓ came out in full force and fervor. The din and bustle of military movements made the Muslim commanders rush to the scene of fighting with their troops. The fierce and hot battle continued day and night for a couple of days. At last, the Romans fled the field leaving eighty thousand men including the Roman general Saqlar dead, and a large quantity of booty. After Fihl, the Muslim army marched to Baisân.



## **Conquest of Baisân**

Here also they anticipated a fierce fight. The Muslim army laid siege to the city and the fort. In the meantime Abu Ubaidah ؓ was informed that a Roman general had marched at the head of a huge army to restore Damascus. Abu Ubaidah ؓ dispatched a squad of horsemen headed by Khâlid bin Walid ؓ. Yazid bin Abu Sufyân ؓ, the governor of Damascus had moved forward to take on the Romans when the detachment led by Khâlid bin Walid ؓ attacked from the rear, with the result that not a single Roman soldier was able to save his life. At last, the people of Baisân made an offer of peace, which was immediately granted by the Muslim general and a governor was installed there. Abu Ubaidah ؓ then sent Abul-A'war As-Sulamî at the head of a division to Tabariyah where the Muslim forces won victory without fight.

## **Conquest of Saida, Irbah and Beirut**

Soon after exercising full control over Damascus, Yazid bin Abu Sufyân sent his brother, Mu'âwiyah bin Abu Sufyân to Irbah at the head of a squadron who conquered Irbah without facing any resistance. Yazid then turned to Saida, Hâbil and Beirut, and these territories easily yielded to the Muslim attack. Thus, Damascus and the entire territory of Jordan came under the control of the Muslims.

## **Campaigns in Iraq**

The smashing victory in Yarmuk led the Muslim army to conquer all of Syria. Now, they were looking forward to conquer Hims, the seat of Heraclius.

## **First Deed of Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud ؓ**

As mentioned above, in the very first week after assuming the caliphate, Umar ؓ dispatched Muthanna bin Hâarithah, Sa'd bin Ubaid, Sulait bin Qais and Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud to Iraq. Even though Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud ؓ, the commander-in-chief of the Iraqi forces, left Al-Madinah along with Muthanna bin Hâarithah ؓ, he stopped to take

with him men from the Arab tribes along the way and made brief halts at different places, he reached Iraq one month after Muthanna. On reaching Hirah, Muthanna bin Hārithah saw with anxiety that the Persians had roused all the Iraqi chiefs against the Muslims and Rustam, the governor of Khurāsān, had taken his position in Madā'in after making massive military preparations. With the arrival of Muthanna, Rustam sent a large army to combat him. Rustam sent another huge army to Kaskar headed by Narsi, a very brave and experienced general of the royal family. The third strong army he entrusted to Jābān and sent it towards the Euphrates, they pitched their camp at Namāriq. Muthanna bin Hārithah on the other hand came out from Hirah and camped at Khaffān.

Meanwhile Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud arrived and took charge of the entire Muslim army. He left Muthanna at Khaffān entrusting him with the command of the Muslim cavalry and he launched a massive attack on Jābān at Namāriq and tore apart their ranks, with the result, the Persians fled the battlefield. Jābān was captured by a Muslim soldier, Matar bin Fiddah, who did not recognize him as Jābān, the Persian general. Taking advantage of this, Jābān offered him two valuable slaves in return for his freedom. He was freed but another Muslim soldier caught him for he knew he was Jābān, the Persian general. He was produced before Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud with the report that he, the Persian general, had obtained safety by fraudulent means. Abu Ubaid probed the matter and found to his satisfaction that the Persian general was given peace and safety by a Muslim soldier. Thus, Abu Ubaid released Jābān who joined his people at Kaskar.

### **Conquest of Kaskar**

Narsi was already encamped at Kaskar with thirty thousand soldiers. Now Jābān and his defeated army also joined him. Informed of the crushing defeat of Jābān, Rustam dispatched from Madā'in a huge army headed by a noted general, Jālinus.

Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud Thaqafi engaged Narsi in battle before the arrival of reinforcements from Madā'in. Two subordinate generals of the royal family had been entrusted with the right and left flanks and

the main body of the army. In the Muslim army, the center was under the command of Abu Ubaid ؓ while the right wing was headed by Sa'd bin Ubaid ؓ, the left wing by Sulait bin Qais ؓ and the advance guard by Muthanna ؓ. The battle soon became fierce. When Muthanna ؓ found the battle dragging on, he severed his column from the army and launched a sudden attack from the rear on the Persian army after making a circle of about eight miles. Narsi was caught unaware. However, he turned a contingent towards the back. But a massive attack from Sa'd bin Ubaid ؓ created chaos in the enemy ranks. Both Sa'd bin Ubaid and Abu Ubaid ؓ went deep into the heart of the Persian troops and had Narsi within their range. In view of the situation the other Muslim fighters also plunged deep into the enemy ranks with the cry of *Allāhu Akbar* (Allāh is the Most Great).

The Persians could not withstand the assault and gave up fighting particularly when they found Narsi retreating. Muthanna ؓ chased the fugitives and the rest of the Muslim army took a large number of the enemy as captives and captured their camps and bazaars. After finishing this arduous task, Abu Ubaid ؓ sent Muthanna, Âsim and Sulait ؓ to clear the surrounding areas of the Persian troops, and they did their job adequately and appreciably.

### **The Battle of Bâqshia**

Narsi was defeated before Jâlinus could join the Persian army. The news of the smashing defeat led him to stop his movement at Bâqshia. Abu Ubaid ؓ marched en route to Saqâtiyah and Kaskar and attacked Jâlinus at Bâqshia who fled the area and stopped only in Madâ'in.

### **The Last Deed of Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud ؓ**

When Jâlinus reached Madâ'in as a retreating leader, the seat of power stirred from within. Rustam, the prime minister of the Persian Empire, gave a call in the court packed with renowned generals and valiant soldiers, "Who can stop the marching steps of the Arabian army and avenge the successive defeats of the Persians?" "None other

than Bihman Jādhwaih can perform this feat," they all cried with one voice. Rustam agreed and entrusted Bihman Jādhwaih with a well-equipped huge army along with three hundred combat elephants and a large quantity of provisions. He was also handed the Kavyāni Banner, which the Persians believed made any army carrying it invincible. Also, Jālinus was chosen to lead the reinforcements with the warning that if he fled again, his head would be struck off. Bihman Jādhwaih marched on with added confidence and determination and he increased his already strong army with men and materials from the tribes they came across on the way to their destination. He pitched his camp at Quss-un-Nātif near the bank of the Euphrates.

Informed of this massive Persian military movement, Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud also proceeded from Kaskar and camped at Marwahah on the other bank of the Euphrates. The deep running water of the river kept the two armies apart and silent for a couple of days. At last, a bridge was constructed over the Euphrates with the common consent of the rivals. On completion of the bridge, Bihman Jādhwaih sent words to his counterpart to choose between fighting from this side of the river or that. Although some Muslim officers were against the Muslim army crossing the bridge, Abu Ubaid led his army across the bridge to the Persian side and drew the battle line. Bihman Jādhwaih put the elephants ahead of his army with archers sitting on them. Horses on the Muslim side had never seen elephants before and they began to flee in terror at the sight of the huge animals. With this scenario of the battle, Abu Ubaid asked his men to fight on foot. When the elephants began to trample the Islamic ranks under their feet, Abu Ubaid called out to strike their swords at the trunks and he was himself the first to do this. He cut off the trunks of several elephants and inflicted deep injuries on their feet with the result the riders fell down and were killed.




Enthused with the matchless bravery of their commanders and commanding officers, the Muslim soldiers made heroic assaults on the elephants. During these fateful moments, Abu Ubaid bin Mas'ud came under the attack of a combat elephant. He fell upon the elephant and struck its trunk off with one stroke of his sword. Despite this the


belligerent animal knocked him down and put his foot on him crushing his chest. Following his martyrdom, his brother Hakam stepped forward and held the standard of Islam. An elephant too, killed him. Thus, six more men from Banu Thaqif who held the flag one by one fell down martyred. The eighth one to hold the standard was Muthanna bin Hārithah ؓ. He took the standard in his hand and encouraged his men with firmness but they appeared disheartened at the loss of seven precious lives to the elephant attacks. Abdullah bin Marthad Thaqafi rushed ahead and broke some planks of the bridge to stop the Muslim soldiers from running away. He then called out his men to fight and be honored with martyrdom like their brethren. Muthanna ؓ collected his scattered men and stood firmly against the enemy. Abu Mihjan Thaqafi and some other officers stood by him. The bridge was repaired and the Muslim soldiers were asked to cross the bridge to safety while Muthanna ؓ and the others stopped the enemy from moving ahead. This battle took a toll of six thousand Muslim combatants including valiant fighters like Sulait bin Qais, Uqbah and Abdullah—sons of Qibti bin Qais, Abbād bin Qais, Qais bin As-Sakan, and Abu Umayyah Fazāri ؓ. The Persians also lost about the same number of men. The runaway Muslim soldiers remained ashamed and repentant for a long time. This battle took place in Sha'bān 13 AH.

### **The Battle of Buwaib**

When Umar Fāruq ؓ came to know of the martyrdom of Abu Ubaid ؓ and the heavy losses incurred by the Muslims, he grew exasperated and with all his energy and resources he commenced preparations for a fresh campaign against the Persians. He dispatched heralds and emissaries to all the tribes and roused them to fight for Islam. Several tribes poured in Al-Madinah and were dispatched to Iraq to lend their help to Muthanna ؓ who had already launched a recruiting drive, which resulted in a large army.

When the Persians were informed of these preparations, Rustam sent a huge army under the command of Mehrān Hamadāni. The reason for Mehrān's nomination to the command was that he was brought up in Arabia and could, therefore, realize the power and strength of the

Arabs and appreciate the magnitude of the task before him. Informed of the Persian movements, Muthanna bin Hârithah  marched with his army and encamped at Buwaib, along the Euphrates. Mehrân, marching from the capital, advanced straight upon Buwaib and pitched his camp on the other side of the Euphrates. He then sent word to Muthanna  to either come to his side or let him come to his (Muthanna's) own side. In the light of the bitter experience of the past, Muthanna  invited him to his side. Mehrân crossed the river with his entire army and combat elephants. He then arranged his forces in the manner that he put his infantry in the front followed by the elephants with archers sitting on them and both right and left flanks were occupied by cavalry divisions.

The Islamic army was also ready to fight. The Persians initiated the attack, which was answered by the Muslims. The battle grew intense and both sides displayed bravery. However, the Muslims were crowned with victory. When Muthanna bin Hârithah  noticed the Persians running away, he rushed forward and broke the bridge, with the result that a large number of the enemy soldiers were either killed or drowned. Mehrân Hamadâni was also killed on the battlefield. As per Ibn Khaldun's account, about one hundred thousand Persian fighters succumbed to death, while only one hundred from the Muslim side were honored with martyrdom. The Persian fugitives were given chase up to Sâbât. Now the entire territory from Sawâd to Tigris came under the Muslim forces. The battle took place in Ramadân 13 AH.

### **After the Defeat of Buwaib**

Because of the killing of Mehrân and the large-scale destruction, there arose a tremendous clamor in the imperial court as well as throughout the entire Persian territory. The ratio of one hundred thousand Persians lost to one hundred Muslims was really unbelievable and shocking to the extreme. The result was a terrible terror and fear of the Muslims came into the Persians' hearts. Although the real power and administration lay in the hands of Rustam, the Persian throne had a woman of the royal family to rule the destiny of its subjects. Now in the wake of the smashing and ignominious defeat, all lips were

moving to say that they had tasted this defeat because a woman was on the Persian throne. Thus the woman was immediately dethroned and Yezdgird, a youth was installed on the throne. Rustam and Firoz were the pillars of the state, but a violent friction raged between them. Now both of them were persuaded to shake hands in the interest of the Persian Empire. Other chiefs and nobles also buried their differences and girded up their lions to serve their country even in the face of death. The coronation of Yezdgird also infused a new life into those who were disheartened because of the adverse state of affairs in every field. The provinces and cities under the possession of Muslim officers began to show signs of unrest and rebellion. The Persian camps were packed with soldiers and the Persian forts and military outposts were fortified and strengthened. Many other regions under the Muslim control broke into revolt and rose in support of the Persians.

### Umar Fâruq's Readiness to face the Persians

Umar Fâruq ؓ came to know of these fresh developments in the month of Dhul-Qa'dah in Al-Madinah. He issued prompt orders for Muthanna ؓ together with all the troops to fall back towards the frontiers of Arabia. He summoned the tribes of Rabi'ah and Mudar that were scattered throughout Iraq, and strengthened his forces and vacated the threatened areas to gather close to the frontiers of Arabia. He also issued orders to the governors to collect and send warriors to fight in the way of Allâh. As the season for the pilgrimage had arrived, Umar ؓ set off to Makkah.

On returning from the *Hajj*, he found Arab tribes pouring in Al-Madinah from all sides. The suburbs of Al-Madinah were now teeming with groups of warriors. He entrusted the divisional command of the vanguard to Talhah ؓ and that of the right wing to Zubair ؓ, while Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf ؓ was appointed to the command of the left wing of the army. When the army was drawn up, he put Ali ؓ in charge of the caliphate, left Al-Madinah, and advanced towards Persia. At Sirâr, the first halt was ordered.

The fact that the *Amir-ul-Mu'minin* (Chief of the believers) himself was leading the army, filled them with unbounded confidence and enthusiasm. However, Uthmân bin Affân ؓ called on the Caliph and

said that it was not expedient that the Chief of the believers should go personally into the battlefield. Following this advice, Umar ؓ convened a general council of war at Sirâr and invited the opinion of everyone present. All unanimously exclaimed that the expedition could not terminate successfully unless the Chief of the believers led it himself.

Thereupon Abdur-Rahman bin Auf ؓ said, "I disapprove of such a suggestion. The Caliph's presence on the battlefield is too risky. In the case, a commander is killed in action, the Caliph can do the needful and keep the situation under complete control; but if Allâh forbid, the Caliph himself is eliminated, it would be extremely difficult to manage the affairs. Ali ؓ was also called from Al-Madinah to take part in this crucial deliberation. He and the elite of the Companions lent support to the opinion of Abdur-Rahman bin Auf ؓ.

Umar Fâruq ؓ got up and made a stirring speech and it ended up by addressing the people thus: "I had a mind to follow your counsel, but the elite of the Companions do not agree to this view. Now who else will do the job?" Following this decision, another problem raised its head. Who will then play the crucial role of commander of the Muslim army at this juncture? When Ali ؓ was proposed to shoulder the responsibility, but he refused to it, Abu Ubaidah ؓ and Khâlid bin Walid ؓ were busy with the expedition in Syria. The people were still in an uncertain frame of mind arguing about this question when Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf ؓ stood up and said: "I have found the man and there could not be a better one." Saying this he named Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ؓ. The entire council agreed including Umar ؓ. He was exalted among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ and was his maternal uncle. Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ؓ was then working among the Hawâzins as a collector of *Zakât*. A letter calling him back was immediately dispatched. He came to the Caliph of Islam after a few days. Until then the Muslim army stayed at Sirâr.

After issuing the necessary instructions and asking him to keep the headquarters aware of all the events and movements big or small, Umar ؓ dispatched the army under his able command. He set forth from Al-Madinah at the head of a detachment made up of four thousand troops and halted at Tha'labah after making eighteen



marches. Directly after the departure of Sa'd's men, Umar Fâruq sent a detachment of two thousand Yemeni soldiers and two thousand Najdi soldiers to reinforce the main force. Muthanna was awaiting the arrival of Sa'd at the village of Dhiqâr, where he was encamped with eight thousand men. It was Muthanna's intention to join Sa'd and to advance towards the Euphrates, but the wounds which he had received in the battle of Jasnawr grew from bad to worse and he finally succumbed to them.


### **Sa'd bin Waqqâs in Iraq**

Marching from Tha'labah, Sa'd pitched his camp at Sirâf. On route from Tha'labah to Sirâf, three thousand warriors of Banu Asad joined Sa'd's army under the order of the Caliph of Islam. At Sirâf, he was strengthened by two thousand fighters under Ash'ath bin Qais.

At the same place, Mu'anna bin Hârithah Shaibânî, the brother of Muthanna met Sa'd and communicated to him the advice bequeathed by his departed brother regarding the enemy forces and their art of warfare. The eight thousand troops of Muthanna joined Sa'd there. The troops were counted in round figures to be between twenty and thirty thousand rank and file. The army included three hundred Companions, who were present during the pledge of Ridwân, while seventy of them had taken part in the battle of Badr.

Sa'd was still at Sirâf when he received a fresh order from the Caliph directing him to proceed towards Qâdisiyah. The order further enjoined upon him to arrange himself in such a manner as to have the plains of Persia in front and the hills of Arabia in the rear. In this way, he might advance as far as he chose in case of victory and take refuge by retreating to the hills in case of defeat.



Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs decamped as ordered by the Caliph and nominated Zubair bin Abdullah bin Qatâdah as the officer of the vanguard. Abdullah bin Al-Mu'tasim was given the right flank, Shurahbil bin As-Samt Kindi the left, Âsim bin Umar At-Tamimi the rearguard; Salmân Fârisi was the supply officer, Abdur-Rahmân bin Rabi'ah Al-Bâhili the judge and treasurer, Hilâl Hijri the translator, Ziyâd bin Abu Sufyân the scribe or secretary.


From Sirāf, Sa'd  headed towards Qādisiyah and arrived at Udhaib. Here the Persians kept their arsenal and military stores which the advancing army confiscated. On reaching Qādisiyah, they had to wait for the Persian army for about two months. During this long stay, they would raid the surrounding Persian areas whenever they ran short of provisions and other necessities.

### **Rustam's Departure from Madā'in**



News began to pour into the Persian capital that the Arabian army was encamped in Qādisiyah and they had ravaged the surrounding areas of the Euphrates. The people of Qādisiyah and its suburbs stormed the court with complaints against the raids of the Muslim troops. They also threatened that if the needful were not done, they would be forced to obey them.

Rustam was wise enough to advise evasion instead of an open encounter. But the mounting pressure on Yezdgird, the Emperor of Persia, forced him to call Rustam, his war minister, to take action and go to Qādisiyah personally to bring an end to the longstanding problem created by the Arabian force. Rustam was in favor of dispatching a number of detachments one after another to keep the Arabian forces too engaged to do anything anywhere else. However, Yezdgird disapproved of the plan outright with the result Rustam came under pressure to leave Madā'in. He marched up to Sābāt where he was joined by forces from almost every part of the country in such great numbers that, in a short time, the total number of the Persian army rose to one hundred and fifty thousand. It was not only a well-equipped army but was showing a maddening rage and fervor against the Islamic forces.

Sa'd bin Abu Waqqās  informed the Caliph of the new developments and enemy movements. Umar Fāruq  wrote back not to fear the least from the magnitude of the enemy forces and keep faith in Allāh the Almighty alone and seek His help and succor in the present position. The Caliph also asked the Commander of the Muslim army to dispatch a diplomatic mission to Yezdgird before engaging the Persians in battle with the object of inviting them to the Islamic faith. If the Emperor rejected the call, he would bear the brunt

of his refusal. In pursuance of the instructions from the Caliph, Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs  selected celebrated personages from the army who were renowned in Arabia for their sagacity, eloquence, imposing appearance, valor and ambition, and sent them from Qâdisiyah to Madâ'in.

### **Islamic Diplomatic Mission**

The diplomatic mission included men of towering stature like Nu'mân bin Muqarrin, Qais bin Zurârah, Asha'th bin Qais, Furât bin Haiyân, Âsim bin Amr, Amr bin Ma'dikarib, Mughirah bin Shu'bah, Mu'anna bin Hârithah, Utârid bin. Hâjib, Busr bin Abu Ruhm, Hanzalah bin Ar-Rabî' and Adi bin Suhail . The ambassadors rode straight to Madâ'in at full gallop leaving behind the troops of Rustam. Informed of the arrival of the ambassadors of Islam, Yezdgird arranged his court in great pomp and splendor. When these Islamic ambassadors, the sons of the desert, entered the court in simple soldier-like style, the entire court was filled with wonder at the sight. After a preliminary question and answer session, Yezdgird asked with an air of self-conceit, "How did you dare face us? And how did you forget that your people are considered as foolish and disgraceful? Have you also forgotten that when you showed a sign of rising up, our governors and junior commissioned officers were ordered to put you right, and they did it." Having heard these words dipped in arrogance, Nu'mân bin Muqarrin  rose to answer with all the confidence at his command. He said in plain words, "We are determined to eradicate idol-worship and polytheism from the face of the earth and present Islam before one and all, for it is through Islam alone that man can attain peace and success. If anyone refuses to accept Islam, it is better for him to entrust himself to the Muslims for peace and safety and pay the *Jizyah*. In case he refuses to accept both, Islam or paying of the *Jizyah*, the matter is decided by the sword."

### **Speech of Qais bin Zurârah**

This speech enraged Yezdgird but he spoke with self-control: "You people are simply brutes and much less in number. So you will never be able to cover any part of our land. However, I can do you this

much as a favor that I will give you food to eat and clothes to wear and appoint for you an officer to treat you politely."

Hearing this Qais bin Zurârah stepped forward and said: "These personages before you are the very essence of Arabian society in virtue of the various gifts of head and heart with which they are endowed. Our noble chieftains and notables of Arabia are overtaken by shame when making a reply to such rubbish. However, I seek to reply to what you said right now and these companions of mine will verify it. Listen! The wretched condition of the Arabs and Arabia you have just described is far better than what we were existing in. But Allâh the Almighty bestowed His utmost favor on us when He sent His Prophet to guide us and to lead us to the right path and put the enemies of the truth and righteousness to disgrace and defeat and promised us victories on earth. Now it is better for you to either accept Islam or agree to pay us the *Jizyah* or you will have to cross swords with us."

Having heard this speech, Yezdgird lost his temper and said, "Had it been legitimate to kill ambassadors, I would have put to death all of you." He then ordered his servants to bring a basketful of earth and place it on the leader's head and he should be turned out from Madâ'in in the same state. He then added, "Rustam will shortly go to bury you all in the trenches of Qâdisiyah." Meanwhile the basket of earth was brought in. Âsim moved forward, put the basket on his shoulder saying, "I am chief of the ambassadors." He then immediately galloped off to Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs and said to him: "Accept my congratulations, for the enemy has voluntarily surrendered the earth of his territory to us." Sa'd expressed his happiness over such an interpretation.

Followed by the return of the ambassadors, fresh orders came to Rustam from the imperial court of Persia at Sâbât along with reinforcing parties. A greater part of a sixty-thousand-man army was under the command of Rustam. The vanguard was headed by Jâlinus which consisted of forty thousand men; rearguard had twenty thousand soldiers; the right wing commanded by Hurmuzân had thirty thousand men while the left one under the command of Mehrân bin Bahrâm Râzi also had thirty thousand troops. Thus, the total

number of Persian soldiers went up to one hundred and eighty thousand. Rustam had in his direct charge one hundred combat elephants while there were seventy-five elephants on the right flank, seventy-five on the left, twenty in the vanguard and thirty in the rearguard. Armed with war equipment and weapons on such a massive scale, Rustam marched from Sâbât and camped at Kutha. Now the distance between the Persian and the Muslim armies was much closer. Small raiding squads would come out from both sides to pounce on the other's provisions and other things of necessity.

Rustam preferred procrastination. He, therefore, spent about six months in covering the distance between Madâ'in and Qâdisiyah. At last, he was compelled to advance and face the Muslims. Pressing injunctions urging him to attack the Muslim forthwith rocked his command center. Contrary to the demand of the Persian Empire, Rustam wanted to achieve success without an encounter. Now in order to put off action still further, Rustam sent words to the Muslim Commander, Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ﷺ to depute one of his trusted men with whom the matter might be discussed.

Sa'd ﷺ sent Rib'i bin Âmir ﷺ. Rustam adorned his court with unwanted splendor and pomp to prepare for the audience with the Muslim ambassador. The entire court was carpeted with cloth of gold, the pillows were of rich silk, while a gem bedecked throne was placed in the center. Rib'i ﷺ came right up to the richly carpeted floor and dismounting from his horse, attached the reins to a pillow. He then moved on supported by a spear piercing into the carpet and cutting it and making holes in it with its point and sat beside Rustam. The courtiers made an attempt to pull him down from the throne and disarm him. Thereupon Rib'i ﷺ thundered, "I have come on invitation and not of my own. Our religion strictly forbids anybody sitting like God and the rest standing before him with their hands folded." Now Rustam intervened and asked them not to do anything against the will of the envoy.

However, on second thought Rib'i ﷺ dismounted from the throne, slit a portion of the carpet with his dagger and sat on the earth and said addressing Rustam, "We are not at all in need of your carpet. The earth spread by Allâh the Almighty is enough for us." Rustam then

asked Rib'i through the interpreter, "What is your object in waging war against us?" Rib'i replied, "We intend to bring the slaves of Allâh the Almighty to the expanse of the next world from the narrowness of this world and promote justice and Islam in place of atrocities and false religions. Anyone who adopts justice and Islam will find us non-interfering in regard to his wealth, property and country. But we shall fight with whoever stands in our way until we go either to Paradise or attain victory. If you seek to pay the *Jizyah*, we shall accept it and will cease to go against you and you will find us standing by you if and when you need us for the safety of your life and property." Having heard this Rustam inquired, "Are you the chief of the Muslims?" Rib'i replied, "No, I am an ordinary soldier. But each one of us, even the most ordinary can speak on behalf of the most powerful person, and every person has full power in every matter."

The utterances of Rib'i left Rustam and his courtiers dumb-founded. Rustam then said, "The scabbard of your sword is quite rotten." Rib'i drew his sword out of the sheathe and said, "But it has been tempered very recently." Rustam again said, the blade of your spear is very small. How can it be of any use in battles?" Rib'i replied, "This blade pierces deep into the chest of the enemy and goes across it. Have you not seen that a spark is enough to burn down an entire city?" After this brief war of words, Rustam said, "Well, I shall ponder over your utterances and hold consultation with my men of sound judgment." Rib'i got up and rode to Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs.

Next day, Rustam sent a fresh message to Sa'd requesting him to send an emissary to him. Sa'd sent Hudhaifah bin Mihsan. He also entered the court riding his horse giving an air of the same stubbornness, which Rib'i had displayed previously. He drew close to the throne on horseback. Rustam said, "What's the reason that you have been sent today instead of the one who had come to me last time?" Hudhaifah replied, "Our Commander does justice to one and all and gives everyone an opportunity to do everything. It was his turn yesterday and it is my turn today." Rustam then asked him, "How much respite could you give me?" Hudhaifah said, "For three days

only from this day." Rustam kept silent, and Hudhaifah rode back straight to Muslim camp. The stubbornness and presence of mind of Hudhaifah left Rustam and his courtiers astonished.

Next day again Rustam requested an envoy from the Muslim camp and Mughirah bin Shu'bah was sent to play his role. Rustam tried both temptation and terror but Mughirah remained unmoved and paid him in the same coin. Helpless and embarrassed, Rustam said in a fit of anger, "I shall never enter into any peace agreement with you and I will kill all of you." Mughirah got up and left peacefully for his camp.

## **The Battle of Qâdisiyah**

Close on the departure of Mughirah, Rustam ordered preparations for a decisive battle. A canal separated the armies. Rustam ordered a bridge to be constructed over the canal, and it was completed within a short period. Rustam then sent word to his counterpart as to who should cross the bridge. Sa'd invited him to cross. Thus, the large and strong Persian army moved across the bridge and battle lines were drawn up. Amr bin Ma'dikarib, Âsim bin Amr, and Rib'i bin Âmir moved through the Muslim army rousing the soldiers for *jihâd*, poets went singing martial songs and the reciters of the Qur'ân recited *Sûrat Al-Anfâl*. Sa'd could not lead his army into the battlefield for he was then suffering from boils and also sciatica, so he was unable to move or ride a horse. Khâlid bin Urfutah was, therefore, asked to command the Muslim soldiers.

Hurmuz, a well-known Persian prince and wrestler came out first. Ghâlib bin Abdullah Asadi accepted the challenge for a duel and advanced to meet him. Hurmuz was held in no time and brought to Sa'd. Another eminent horseman from the Persian ranks threw a challenge which was duly accepted by Âsim. However, a stroke or two scared him off. But Âsim gave him chase and caught his horse by its tail and dragged Hurmuz back from under the nose of the Persian vanguard. The valor of Âsim maddened with anger another noted Persian wrestler who moved forward with a silver mace in his hand. Amr bin Ma'dikarib advanced to meet his challenge, apprehended him at once and put him on his side.



Now protests from the Persian warriors compelled Rustam to launch an all-out assault on the Muslim troops, and by way of a war strategy, combat elephants were set off to attack the Muslim ranks. Bujailah tribe obstructed them at the cost of heavy casualties. Sa'd ؓ who was watching the battle scene very minutely, reinforced the Bujailah with Banu Asad who showed utmost manliness in the assigned duty. But when they also showed signs of reverses, the warriors of Banu Kindah took the field and made such a heavy charge that the Persians were forced to show their back. In view of constant retreat and repulses, Rustam ordered a joint attack. Sa'd ؓ cried *Takbir* (*Allāhu Akbar* - Allāh is the Most Great) at the top of his voice and the entire Muslim army joining the *Takbir* of Sa'd ؓ, charged the Persian troops. It looked as if two oceans or mountains collided against each other. When the rival forces were mixed up, the Persian elephants began to cause heavy casualties on the Muslim side. Sa'd ؓ immediately ordered the archers to shoot arrows at the elephants and their riders. Āsim ؓ charged at the elephants with his lance followed by others who commenced inflicting deep wounds on the elephants' trunks with their spears and swords. With the result that the elephants retreated leaving the Muslim swordsmen to display their mettle. After an all day long battle, night intervened to stop it until the next day.

Early the next morning after the *Fajr* (dawn) prayer, Sa'd ؓ buried the martyred in the eastern part of Qādisiyah. The engagement had left a toll of five hundred men martyred on Muslim side. After sunrise, the armies arrayed themselves against each other once again. Fighting had not yet started when Muslim reinforcements from Syria headed by Hāshim bin Utbah were reported to be approaching. With one thousand fighters, the officer of the vanguard Qa'qā' bin Amr ؓ gave the news to Sa'd ؓ and took the field with his permission. He first challenged for a duel and Bihman Jādhwaih came forward but was killed by Qa'qā' ؓ. After a number of Persian strongmen were killed, Rustam ordered an all-out attack.

Heavy fighting took place. Informed of the prevailing situation, Hāshim bin Utbah, the reinforcements' commander, divided his six thousand strong detachment into small segments and each of them entered into the battlefield with the cry of *Allāhu Akbar* (Allāh is the



Most Great) at short intervals. This new development sent terror into the hearts of the Persian troops. However, their combat elephants were a menace to the Muslims even on this day. At last the Muslim soldiers devised a new plan. They put on their camels long coverings so that they looked like elephants, with the result that the Persians' horses were scared off by the fearful sight inflicting on Persian army even heavier losses. Qa'qâ' killed many renowned Persian officers and well-known horsemen. The daylong battle left one thousand martyred on the Muslim side and ten thousand dead on the enemy's side.

The third day, Sa'd buried the martyrs just after performing *Fajr* (dawn) prayer and delivered the wounded to the accompanying women to be bandaged and nursed. Then the battle line was drawn between the two forces. The Persians put their elephants at the head. However, Qa'qâ' and Âsim launched together such a fierce assault on the leading white elephant that it fell dead. When another elephant was targeted, it fled for its life and all the other elephants followed suit creating havoc and causing tremendous losses to the Persian side.

The two forces separated in the evening only for a short while after fighting all day long. And the battle, which began again after sunset, continued until the next morning. Neither Sa'd nor Rustam could perceive the battle conditions due to the darkness and loud battle cries. Sa'd, the commander of the Muslim army, kept praying through the whole night. Sometime after midnight in the din of battle, he heard Qa'qâ' yell: "Gather together to attack the main body and catch Rustam." This auspicious voice not only brought satisfaction to Sa'd but infused new courage and determination in the Muslim troops.





Extremely exhausted after a daylong battle, all the tribes rose as one man to charge forcefully at the enemy. When the horsemen of Qa'qâ' reached near Rustam, he got down from his throne and began to fight. However, on being wounded he took to his heels. But Hilâl bin Ullafah chased him and hit him so powerfully with his spear that his hip was broken and he fell down in a nearby canal. Hilâl dismounted from his horse at once, pulled him out by his legs and put him to

death. Following this Hilāl called out at the top of his voice standing on Rustam's throne: "By Allāh, I have killed Rustam." Having heard this announcement, the Muslim troops cried *Allāhu Akbar* (Allāh is the Most Great) and the Persian soldiers were left shocked and astonished. They fled the battlefield. Out of thirty thousand Persian cavaliers only thirty saved their lives. About six thousand Muslims were honored with martyrdom. Sa'd ؓ gave all the belonging of Rustam to Hilāl bin Ullafah. Qa'qā' ؓ and Shurahbil ؓ were asked by Sa'd ؓ to chase the Persian fugitives but Zuhrah bin Hawiyah had already done this job and killed Jālinus who was collecting the runaway Persian soldiers, and seized his belongings. Sa'd ؓ had some reservations about handing over the belongings of Jālinus to Zuhrah but Umar Fāruq ؓ ordered to give them all to Zuhrah and appreciated his services. Immediately after the peace of victory prevailed, Sa'd ؓ collected the spoils of war and wrote a letter to Umar Fāruq ؓ, the Caliph of Islam, giving him glad tidings of the Muslim victory. A speeding courier was sent to Al-Madinah with the letter.

Ever since the commencement of the campaign of Qādisiyah, Umar ؓ used to go out of Al-Madinah at daybreak and await the messenger from the war zone. One day, according to his habit, he went out of the city and saw a camel rider speeding from the opposite direction. Umar ؓ eagerly advanced and asked him where he was coming from? He said that he was coming from Qādisiyah with good news. Allāh the Almighty has crowned the Muslims with a clear victory. The Caliph began to make inquires from him. He was running by the side of the camel and plied its rider with questions. The camel rider on entering the precincts of the city found that every man whom they passed addressed his companion on foot as 'Amir-ul-Mu'minin'. He trembled with fear and said, "My leader, why did you not tell me your name so that I may not have been unwittingly guilty of this misunderstanding?" Umar ؓ reassured him observing: "Do not be uneasy. There is no harm done. Go on with your news." So he walked by the side of the camel rider on the way to his house. Then convening a large conference of the people of Al-Madinah he told them the joyful tidings and made an eloquent and stirring speech which ended thus:

"O Muslims, I am not a king that it should be my desire to make you my slaves. I am myself a slave of Allāh, though the responsibilities of the caliphate have been made to be heavy upon my head. I should deem myself fortunate if I served you in a manner that secured your sound and tranquil sleep in your homes, but I would be a miserable wretch if it were my desire to make you wait constantly upon me and mount a guard at my doors. It is my object to instruct you not only by words, but by my deeds also."

### **Conquest of Babylon and Kutha**

After their flight from Qādisiyah, the Persians quartered themselves at Babylon. A number of renowned generals set themselves to making preparations for giving battle again. Fugitives of the battle of Qādisiyah were also collected and encouraged to avenge their defeat. Sa'd  stayed in Qādisiyah for about two months after the Muslim victory. On receiving fresh orders from the Caliph, he marched to Madā'in, leaving his family in Qādisiyah. Before his departure he dispatched Zuhrah bin Hawiyah at the head of the vanguard who marched on killing, removing and enslaving his enemies until he reached Babylon. Sa'd  also joined him there with his troops. With the news of the arrival of Sa'd , the Persian generals left Babylon and moved to Madā'in, Ahwāz and Nihāwand destroying the bridges on the way and making the Tigris and its canals impossible to cross. When Sa'd  heard of the flight of the Persians, he sent Zuhrah at their back and moved behind him at the head of a big army.

When Zuhrah arrived at Kutha, Shahryār opposed him and came personally onto the battlefield, he challenged the bravest of the Arabs to meet him in single combat. Zuhrah said, "I had intended to fight with you, but in view of your bragging and vaunting, a slave will confront you and he will put down your arrogance." Thus saying he motioned Nā'il bin Ju'shum A'raj, a slave of the Tamim clan, who pressed his charger forward. Shahryār had the proportions and strength of a giant. Seeing in Nā'il a weak and puny adversary, he flung away his lance and grasping him by the throat, pulled him off his horse, hurled him to the ground and then sat upon his chest. Now,


as chance would have it, Shahryâr's thumb went into Nâ'il's mouth who bit it so severely that Shahryâr was beside himself with pain. Nâ'il taking advantage of the opportunity sprang up lightly and sitting on the breast of his adversary, plunged his dagger deep into the body of Shahryâr ripping his stomach open. With the sight of the killing of Shahryâr, the Persian troops took to their heels. Shahryâr was clad in brilliant robes and armed with excellent weapons. Nâ'il stripped him off all and placed them before Sa'd. In order to teach his followers a lesson, Sa'd ordered Nâ'il to put on the dress and armor of the slain warrior. In pursuance of this command, Nâ'il arrayed in the gaudy effects and splendid accouterment of Shahryâr, came before the public assembly and as the people saw him, the vivid spectacle of the ironies of the world and the fickleness of fortunes passed before their eyes.

### **The Fall of Bahurasir**

Kutha was the historical place where Nimrod is said to have imprisoned Abraham (Ibrahim). The dungeon was still preserved as a relic. Sa'd paid a visit to this sanctuary. At some distance from Kutha was Bahurasir, a city in close proximity to the capital. A very strong squad of the imperial guard and a huge garrison were kept in Bahurasir to guard the seat of power. The Tigris alone intervened between Bahurasir and Madâ'in. Sa'd advanced and laid siege to Bahurasir. At last, the people of the city came out to face the Muslims but it resulted in their death and destruction. Yezdgird took to flight along with his treasure upon the fall of Bahurasir, his flight marked that the Muslims were still not totally out of danger.

### **Horses across the River**


Sa'd was now in a rush to capture Madâ'in. However, the Tigris lay in the way. The fleeing Persians had demolished and broken all the bridges. When Sa'd arrived at the bank of the Tigris, he found neither bridge nor boats. The next day Sa'd mounted on his horse and said after getting his troops ready, "Who among you is brave enough to promise to save me from an enemy onslaught while I cross the river?" Âsim bin Amr came forward and offered his services.

He sat on raised ground at the bank of Tigris with a squadron of six hundred archers. Sa'd  recited:

"We seek the Help of Allāh, entrust on Him, Allāh is enough for us and what an Excellent Supporter He is. There is no might and strength but with Allāh Who is High and Great."

He then charged right into the surging water of the Tigris. Others also followed suit and rushed their horses into the river. The river was deep and fast moving but the turbulent conditions could not affect the resolute and undaunted spirits of the Muslim army. The waves slammed furiously against the sides of the horses, but the horsemen steered their course coolly and in perfect order. When the cavalry was half way cross the river, the Persian archers began to shoot arrows at the Muslim troops but in vain. The Muslim fighters crossed the river by force and put the opposing force to death.

## **The Conquest of Madā'in**

With the news of the crossing of the river by the Muslims, Yezdgird took flight from Madā'in. The Muslim troops began to enter the city from different directions. Sa'd  stepped in the White Palace (royal palace) reciting the Verses:

"How many of gardens and springs do they left. And green crops and goodly places. And comforts of life wherein they used to take delight! Thus! And we made other people inherit them." (44:25-28)

He offered eight *Rakāt* (units) of *Salāt-ul-Fath* (victory prayer). In the palace of Kisra (Chosroes), a pulpit was set up in place of the royal throne and the Friday prayer was performed there. This was the first Friday prayer that was performed in the Persian capital. Nothing of the paintings, portraits and images were destroyed. The commander of the Muslim army ordered that the treasures and curiosities of the royal palaces should be brought and accumulated in one place. There were vast riches including thousands of rare and priceless heirlooms handed down and preserved from the Kayāni dynasty until the time of Nushirwān. They included the coats of mail and swords of the monarchs of the Empires of China, the Emperor of Rome, Dāhir Shah of India, Bahrām Gour, Nu'mān bin Mundhir, Siyawash. The

poniards, swords, coats of mail and the helmets of Kisra, Hurmuz and Firoz were also preserved in the royal museum. The Persians were proud of their antique possessions. Sa'd ❀ permitted Qa'qâ' ❀ to choose for himself one of the swords. He was pleased to pick the sword of Heraclius, the Roman monarch. Sa'd ❀ gave him also the coat of mail of Bahrâm Gour.

Sa'd ❀ dispatched to the seat of the caliphate all the priceless possessions and curiosities of the conquered palaces of Persia. The most wonderful and exquisitely magnificent of all was a carpet which the Persians called *Bahâr* (Spring). After the season of ethereal mildness was over, this carpet was used for the feast of wine. The carpet was provided with all the effects of spring, which art and wealth could allow to be imitated. In the center was a bucolic landscape bordered on all sides with ornamental avenues around which trees and plants of various descriptions were laden with buds and flowers and fruits. Everything was worked in gold, silver and precious stones. The ground work was of gold, the greenery of emerald, the borders of topaz, the trees of gold and silver, the leaves of silk and the fruits were gems. Umar Fâruq ❀ distributed the booty among the troops. With regard to the celebrated carpet, the public opinion was that it should not be distributed but preserved. Ali ❀ persistently held aloof from this opinion and at his instance this carpet also was distributed among the people in cut up pieces. The piece Ali ❀ shared was not so fine, however, he sold it for thirty thousand dinars.

## The Conquest of Jalula

When Madâ'in fell to the Muslims, Yezdgird fled to Hulwân. Kharzâd bin Farkhzâd, brother of Rustam Farkhzâd, who was the commander-in-chief, displayed great skill in gathering a large army. He had a moat built around the city and the fort. *Gokhru* (the many-pointed thorns of murex) were scattered along the roadsides and pathways. These military preparations were so massive that the Muslim camp easily became aware of it. Sa'd ❀ on receiving the news, wrote to Umar ❀ who replied that Hâshim bin Utbah should be sent on this expedition at the head of twelve thousand troops. The command of the vanguard, the right wing, the left wing, and the rearguard should

be entrusted to Qa'qâ', Ma'shar bin Mâlik, Amr bin Mâlik and Amr bin Murrah respectively.

Hâshim, marching from Madâ'in, reached Jalula on the fourth day and laid siege of the city. The siege continued for several months. Occasionally the Persians would make a sudden attack on the besiegers. In this manner many engagements were contested in which the Persians invariably met with reverses. However, the city was stocked with supplies and provisions of all sorts and their forces numbered hundreds of thousands, they did not lose heart. One day they rushed out recklessly but their forces were smashed leaving about one hundred thousand troops dead and spoils worth thirty million.

When Yezdgird learned the news of the disaster of Jalula, he left Hulwân for Rey, placing Khusru Shanum, an officer of renown, in charge of Hulwân with a few squadrons of cavalry. Qa'qâ' was dispatched to Hulwân at the head of some troops. A short but fierce struggle ensued in which Khusru Shanum was routed.

While communicating the joyful tidings of the victory, Sa'd was dispatched a fifth portion of the booty to Al-Madinah. Ziyâd, the messenger, described the battle with an eloquence which did him immense credit. Umar asked him to recount the events in the same eloquent style before a public assembly. A public assembly was accordingly convened and Ziyâd narrated the incidents of the battle with a command of language and an eloquence that portrayed the fray in its minutest detail. Afterwards Ziyâd brought forth the spoils, which were stored in the courtyard of the mosque.

In the morning the mantle, which covered the goods was drawn aside, heaps of precious stones were revealed. Tears ran down the face of Umar as the sight met his gaze. Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf said to him, "Why do you weep instead of giving thanks?" Umar Fâruq replied, "Where riches appear, envy and jealousy are bound to follow in their wake."

In response to Sa'd's seeking the Caliph's permission to march towards Persia, he ordered him to take a rest for some days as the Muslim soldiers were exhausted and needed it.

## Syrian Engagements

### The Fall of Hims

Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrâh ؓ marched to Hims and halted at Dhul-Kala'. Hims is one of the important districts of Syria. In ancient times it was greatly noted because of a temple dedicated to the sun. People would come from distant places on pilgrimage to this temple, and its devotees prided themselves on this fact. After the fall of Damascus and Jordan, three important cities remained to be conquered, which would mean the subjugation of the whole of Syria. They were Hims, Antâkiyah (Antioch) and Jerusalem. When the Muslim army camped at Dhul-Kala', Heraclius sent General Taudhar to engage them in the battle. Another General Shams was also ordered to join the attack. However, both of them were completely routed and Abu Ubaidah ؓ killed Shams.

When the fleeing soldiers reached Hims, Heraclius left for Ar-Ruha. Abu Ubaidah ؓ marched on and besieged Hims. And, in spite of the best efforts of Heraclius, the people of Hims remained without any outside help. At last they yielded followed by Hamah, Al-Lâdhiqiyah and Salamyah.

### Fall of Qinnasrin

Following the conquest of Salamyah, Khâlid bin Walid ؓ, with the permission of Abu Ubaidah ؓ, marched to Qinnasrin where Minâs, only second to Heraclius in position, faced Khâlid ؓ but tasted defeat after a fierce encounter. He took refuge in a citadel but Khâlid ؓ captured it after laying siege to it. Umar Fâruq ؓ grew happy and added to his power and authority.

### Conquest of Halab and Antâkiyah

After finishing his task in Qinnasrin, Abu Ubaidah ؓ marched to Halab (Aleppo) where he came to know that the people of Qinnasrin had risen in revolt. He at once dispatched a squadron to the spot of the disturbance. When they were brought under siege, they expressed



their loyalty once again and saved themselves by paying a heavy penalty. Abu Ubaidah ؓ halted near Halab and sent in advance Iyâd bin Ghanam, the commanding officer of the vanguard. He marched to Halab and laid a siege around the city, which surrendered to the Muslims.



After Halab, Abu Ubaidah's next target was Antâkiyah (Antioch), which was the Asian capital of Heraclius. It was a fortified city with a number of royal palaces. Thus the fleeing and fugitive Christians took refuge in this city. When the Muslim troops arrived at Antâkiyah, the Christians came out to face the Muslims and were completely routed and fled back to the city. When they came under siege, they earned peace in return for paying the *jizyah*.

News then came to the Muslim camp that Christian troops were gathering in Mu'arraḥ Masrin, a place near Halab. Abu Ubaidah ؓ marched to punish the antagonists and the result was a bloody fight between the two forces which resulted in their earning peace like the people of Halab. Antâkiyah was reported to have again risen in revolt but Iyâd bin Ghanam and Habib bin Maslamah were already there to crush it by force.

The repeated uprisings of the Christians in different regions were putting the Muslim troops to great hardships. Abu Ubaidah ؓ brought the situation to the knowledge of Umar Fâruq ؓ. He ordered Muslim squadrons to be deputed to all the trouble spots at the cost of *Bait-ul-Mâl* (public exchequer). After the fall of Antâkiyah, dozens of surrounding villages and towns came on their own to the fold of the Muslim forces.




### **Fall of Baghrâs, Mar'ash and Hadath**

After winning decisive victories throughout Syria and deputing Muslim commanding officers and administrators to all the cities under Muslims possession, Abu Ubaidah ؓ turned towards Palestine. A Muslim detachment under the command of Maisarah bin Masruq was dispatched to Baghrâs, a town in the neighborhood of Antâkiyah bordering on the frontier of Asia Minor. Many of the Arab Christians such as the Ghassâns, the Tanukh and the Iyyâds were preparing at



this place to accompany the Romans to the Emperor Heraclius. Maisarah bin Masruq attacked them and a fierce conflict took place. Abu Ubaidah  dispatched reinforcements under Mâlik bin Ashtar Nakh'i. With the arrival of fresh troops, the Christians fled in terror. Khâlid bin Walid  led a column against Mar'ash which capitulated on the condition that the Christians should evacuate the city. In the same way Habib bin Maslamah marched to Hadath (old name of Ararat Mountain) and conquered it.

### **Conquest of Qaisâriyah and Ajnâdain**

In course of time when Muslim troops were winning victories in Antâkiyah and its suburbs, Yazid bin Abu Sufyân, the governor of Damascus sent his brother, Mu'âwiyah bin Abu Sufyân towards Qaisâriyah (Caesarea or Kayseri) as per the Caliph's order. After a heavy toll of eighty thousand Christians, the city fell to the Muslims.

Heraclius now ordered Artabun, a noted general, to gather troops in Ajnâdain. Artabun kept a huge army under his direct command and two other detachments in Ramlah and Jerusalem. Well-equipped and huge in number, the opponents of Islam were awaiting the arrival of the Muslim force. Amr bin Al-Âs  marched to Ajnâdain to face Artabun while he dispatched Alqamah bin Hakim Firâsi and Masrur bin Al-Akki to Jerusalem and Abu Ayub Al-Mâliki to Ramlah with the permission of Abu Ubaidah . A fierce battle was fought in Ajnâdair. It was a conflict similar to Yarmuk. Artabun could not muster courage to face Amr bin Al-Âs  and fled to Jerusalem and the city fell to the Muslim forces.

### **Conquest of Jerusalem**

After the flight of Artabun to Jerusalem, Amr bin Al-Âs  conquered Ghazzah (Gaza), Sabastiyah, Nâbulus (Nablus), Ludd, Amawâs, Bait Jibrin, and Yâfa (Yafo). He then proceeded to Jerusalem and tightened the siege. About the same time, Abu Ubaidah  had proceeded to Palestine. The news of his arrival disheartened the besieged Christians who were defending themselves until then. They were left with no alternative but to make peace negotiations. All of them knew about the readiness of the

Muslims to accept a peace proposal and their easy terms. However, the Christians of Jerusalem put a novel condition on finalizing the peace agreement. They wanted the Caliph of Islam to reach Jerusalem to write down the peace document. Even though the fall of the city was only a matter of time, Abu Ubaidah ؓ was in favor of avoiding further death and destruction, so he preferred peace to war. He wrote a letter to the Caliph delineating the whole account of events with the request that his arrival in Jerusalem could win for them the city without shedding a drop of blood.

Umar Fâruq ؓ convened a meeting of all the distinguished Companions and consulted them. Uthmân ؓ declared that the Christians had been struck with terror and lost heart and that if the Caliph were to reject their request, they would be still more humiliated, and consider that the Muslims regarded them with utter contempt, they would lay down their arms unconditionally. Ali ؓ, however, dissented from this view and gave the contrary opinion. Umar ؓ shared the same opinion.

### **Umar Fâruq's Journey to Palestine**

On this historic mission to Jerusalem, a bag full of parched barley meal, a camel, a slave, and a wooden cup were all the belongings of Umar Fâruq ؓ, the Chief of the Muslims, when he left Al-Madinah, the headquarters of Islam. Leaving Uthmân ؓ in charge of Al-Madinah, he set out on the journey noted for its strain and stress.

It was a novel scenario of Islamic equality and human dignity that the journey undertaken had at times the Caliph on the camel and the slave walking along holding the halter of the camel and vice versa. It was the journey of a magnificent and powerful Islamic ruler whose cavalry had already trampled down palaces and crowns and thrones under the hooves of its horses. It was Rajab 16 AH, when Madâ'in and Antâkiyah (Antioch) had been conquered.

The commanders of the Muslim forces at Damascus and Jerusalem were already informed about the movement of the Caliph of Islam. Thus Yazid bin Abu Sufyân, Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrâh and Khâlid bin Walid ؓ received the Caliph of Islam with exemplary honor. But when

Umar ﷺ saw them arrayed in brilliant dresses and imposing appearance, he flew into a fit of rage at the sight of them that he remarked: "Within the short span of two years have you fallen into Persian habits?" But when the officers explained that they had their weapons beneath the silken tunics and they had not lost their Arabian character, the Caliph gained peace of heart.

## **A Peace Document for the Christians**

The Chief of believers sojourned for a long while at Jâbiyah where some of the nobles of the city proceeded to see him and the treaty was drawn up there which is as follows:

"This is the peace document, which the Chief of the Muslims has written for the people of Iylia'. Peace is given to one and all in Iylia', peace of life and property, and peace to their church, cross, sick, healthy and to the followers of all religions. Nobody is allowed to reside in their churches nor will they be demolished nor are their boundaries to be damaged nor their cross to be desecrated nor their religion to be defiled. Moreover, Jews will not be allowed to live with them in Iylia'. The people of Iylia' are duty-bound to pay the *Jizyah* and turn out the Greeks and Romans. And those among the Greeks and Romans who will leave the city, their life and property will be provided perfect safety until they reach a place of safety. If a Roman prefers to live in Iylia', he is bound to give the *Jizyah* like the rest of the citizens; if an Iylian intends to go with the Romans, he will enjoy complete peace until he reaches a protected place. Whatever this treaty contains is to be fulfilled by Allâh, the Caliphs of Islam and the entire Muslim community provided the Iylians pay the *Jizyah*."

The elite of the Companions like Khâlid bin Walid, Amr bin Al-Âs, Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf and Mu'âwiyah ﷺ subscribed to it. The people of Jerusalem paid the *Jizyah* on the spot and opened the doors of the city. The people of Ramlah also followed suit. Umar Fâruq ﷺ entered Bait-ul-Maqdis (the Dome of the Rock) barefooted. First of all he went to the Mosque of Al-Aqsa and approaching the Arch of David he recited the Verse from the Qur'ân which speaks of the

Prophet David (Dāwud ؑ) as bowing down to Allāh the Almighty and then he prostrated himself in humble obeisance. He then visited the church of the Christians and walked around the building for sometime.

## **Fall of Takrit and Jazirah**

Takrit was under a junior Persian commissioned officer. When he heard of the fall of Madā'in, he drew the attention of the Romans to the incident. The Romans also joined the cause easily because they were also against the Muslim forces. Other Christian Arab tribes such as Iyyād, Taghlib and Namir also followed suit. On the instruction of Umar Fāruq ؑ, Sa'd bin Abu Waqqās ؑ deputed Abdullah bin Al Mu'tam to head the expedition. Abdullah marched on Takrit at the head of five thousand troops and invaded the city. After a bloody battle, the joint Roman and Persian forces were beaten. Most of the Arabian clans embraced Islam.

The province of Jazirah fell between the frontiers of Syria and Iraq and was at times annexed by both the Empires. Successive campaigns and victories of the Muslim forces sent terror into the hearts of the people of Jazirah. They wrote to Heraclius to send a force to guard the eastern cities against the ensuing Muslim attack and they promised to jointly rise to lend their help and support to Heraclius' troops. Heraclius, thinking it to be a sign from the God, dispatched his troops to the eastern cities of Syria. Assessing the crucial situation, Umar Fāruq ؑ instructed Sa'd ؑ to keep a check on the forward movement of the people of Jazirah and wrote Abu Ubaidah ؑ to obstruct the march of Heraclius' detachment towards Hims and Qinnasrin. Both the commanders did their job appreciably well and Iyād bin Ghanam ؑ captured the province of Jazirah after small skirmishes. This event took place in 17 AH.

## **Return of Iyyād Tribe**

When Jazirah fell to the Muslims the Iyyād tribe, which confessed Christianity, shifted to Heraclius' territory in self-exile and settled there. Informed of the event, Umar Fāruq ؑ wrote to Heraclius:

"I have been informed that a tribe from among the Arabian tribes has left our country to settle in your cities. If you refuse to turn them out from your country, we shall send to you all the Christians inhabiting our territory."

Immediately after the receipt of this warning from the Caliph of Islam, Heraclius issued orders to banish the people of the Iyyâd tribe numbering four thousand in all. They went back to Syria and Jazirah and settled there. Umar Fâruq appointed Habib bin Maslamah and Walid bin Uqbah administrators of Iraq-Ajam and Iraq-Arab respectively. On the return of the Arabs, he wrote Walid bin Uqbah not to force Islam on them and accept the *Jizyah* from them if they so desired. Granting no choice but Islam is a practice, which should be adopted only in case of the Arab Peninsula and Yemen. However the principle applies to the progeny of Muslim parents and they cannot be converted to Christianity by force. Moreover, none should be held back from coming to the fold of Islam.

Walid bin Uqbah made no delay in implementing the orders of Umar Fâruq. A few days after, the Iyyâd sent a deputation to Al-Madinah with the request that no amount should be collected from them in the name of *Jizyah*. Umar Fâruq issued orders to collect from them double the amount in the name of *Saddqah* (charity) in place of *Jizyah* (tax), which the Iyyâd accepted happily. After some days, the tribe lodged a complaint against Walid bin Uqbah. The Caliph took prompt action and appointed Furât bin Haiyân and Hind bin Amr Al-Jamali to do the job and deposed Walid bin Uqbah without delay.

### **Deposition of Khâlid bin Walid**

People are generally mistaken about the event of the deposition of Khâlid bin Walid. They subscribe to the misconception that Umar Fâruq had deposed Khâlid bin Walid soon with his installation as the Caliph of Islam. The fact is that Umar did not deposed him during the earlier period of his Caliphate, he had only curtailed his position by reducing him to a deputy commander from commander-in-chief of the Muslim army. Now he had to first consult and receive permission from Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrâh before any action, so his leading of Muslim forces through dangerous adventures came to an end.

The incident of Khâlid's deposition occurred in the last months of 17 AH. Umar Fâruq used to keep himself informed of the activities of every commander, general, officer and governor. Even though every governor or commander had to inform the Caliph with the account of matters and affairs of all kinds, he also had correspondents in every city and military wing who wrote to him about events and incidents that would take place in their areas of activity.

Thus a correspondent of the Caliph once informed him that on his return to Syria after the fall of Jazirah, Khâlid bin Walid had brought with him immense riches and property and granted ten thousand dirhams to Ash'ath bin Qais, a poet, in return for writing an ode for him. Umar addressed a letter to Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrâh instructing him: "Ask Khâlid in the presence of an audience whether he has made the present in question out of his own purse or from the public treasury. In case he has given it from his own purse, it is a sheer extravagance; and if he has given it from the public treasury, he has committed an offence of criminal breach of trust; and in either case he deserves to be deposed. Let his neck be tied with his own turban. But, if he admits his fault then he is to be forgiven."

Accordingly, he was called before a public gathering. The Caliph's messenger inquired of him, "Wherefrom did you make this present?" Khâlid bin Walid kept silent and held back from confessing his fault. Thus the messenger found himself under compulsion to remove his turban and tie his neck with it. On asking again, Khâlid revealed that he had given the reward to Ash'ath from his own possessions, not from the public treasury. Hearing this the messenger untied his neck and reported the matter to the Caliph who called Khâlid to Al-Madinah for an explanation.

Khâlid bin Walid said to the Caliph: "Umar! By Allâh, you are not doing justice to me." Umar said to him, "Wherefrom have you collected so much wealth and how did you give away such a substantial amount to a poet for a reward?" Khâlid said, "I had given it from my share of booty." Khâlid further said, "Well, I will deposit with the public treasury any amount I have exceeding sixty thousand." Thus, after checking the whole account, twenty thousand dirhams exceeded the stipulated amount, which was immediately

deposited with the public treasury and the matter was cleared up in good faith from both sides. It was a weakness with Khâlid bin Walid that he spent lavishly without submitting the accounts to the financial authorities. Hence, it was purely and totally in the interest of fair and exemplary administration that some curb was put on Khâlid bin Walid's way of dealing with public finance. And the step taken by the Caliph was just a warning and nothing else.

### **Basrah and Kufah**

From the reports of the military commanders and the soldiers returning from Iraq, Umar Fâruq gathered that the climate of Iraq did not suit them. He issued orders that cantonments for the Arabian forces should be set up at places where they could enjoy climate similar to that of Arabia so that the Arabian soldiers could, after finishing their job, take rest therein.

One cantonment was set up near the Tigris with thatched roofs. While going on a campaign, they would set the thatch on fire and repaired it again on their return. Umar Fâruq constructed some houses in Basrah in 17 AH, and approved a new cantonment for Kufah. With the construction of houses, both these places began to be rapidly populated because of the healthy climate of these regions. And within a short period, both the cities came to be known as the centers of Muslim power.

### **Conquest of Ahwâz, and Hurmuzân accepts Islam**

Running away from the battle of Qâdisiyah, the well-known Persian commander, Hurmuzân took refuge in Khuzestân, the capital of Ahwâz province and devoted himself wholeheartedly to collecting soldiers by capturing the surrounding cities. Muslim forces emerged from the cantonments of Kufah and Basrah and charged at Ahwâz which fell to them. Hurmuzân earned peace from the Muslims in return for paying the *Jizyah*. After a few days, Hurmuzân rose in revolt against the Muslims but was again beaten thoroughly. He again sought peace for *Jizyah* and it was granted. Meanwhile news came that Yezdgird, the Persian monarch, was collecting a huge army to attack the Muslims.



On receiving this disturbing news, Umar Fâruq ﷺ immediately wrote Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ﷺ to deploy Islamic squadrons at all the avenues of access. As a precautionary measure, a squadron was also sent to take care of the activities of Hurmuzân. Since he was counting on Yezdgird, he rose against the Muslim force with a big army and the result was a complete rout. Hurmuzân fled to Tustar and devoted himself again to making preparations for battling with the Muslims. When Umar Fâruq ﷺ heard of this, he sent Abu Musa Ash'ari ﷺ as the Commander of the army stationed at Basrah.

Abu Musa ﷺ advanced towards Tustar and after a number of encounters, Hurmuzân took shelter in his fort for a defensive battle. However, he was greeted by an ignominious defeat and the city fell to the Muslims. The fort was about to fall when Hurmuzân sent a petition to Abu Musa ﷺ mentioning that he was ready to surrender on the sole condition that he be dispatched to Umar Fâruq ﷺ and let him decide about him (Hurmuzân). His petition was granted and he was sent to Al-Madinah in the company of Anas bin Mâlik and Ahnaf bin Qais ﷺ. Reaching the area bordering Al-Madinah, he put on costly and glamorous garments and his glittering crown.

Umar Fâruq ﷺ thanked Allâh when he noticed such a general as a captive. The Caliph then said to him, "You have backed out of your promise more than once, what punishment do you deserve then? And what do you want to say in self-defense?" Hurmuzân said, "I am afraid you will slay me before hearing my excuse." The Caliph said, "Fear not, your excuse will be definitely heard." Hurmuzân then asked for some drinking water. He then took the cup of water in his hand and said, "I am afraid you will kill me while I am drinking this water." Umar Fâruq ﷺ said, "Fear not in the least, you will be put to no harm unless you have drunk this cup of water." Hearing this Hurmuzân kept the cup back and said, "I won't drink, and you cannot kill me as per your promise."

### Graceful Treatment of Umar ﷺ:

Hearing this, Umar Fâruq ﷺ angrily said, "You tell a lie, I have not given you peace." Thereupon Anas bin Mâlik ﷺ intervened and said, "O Chief of the believers, he tells the truth. You have just promised

him that he will not be harmed until he has drunk the cup of water and given his account." Hearing this Umar Fâruq ؓ was left wonder-struck and said addressing Hurmuzân, "You have deceived me but I will not do the same. It is better for you to convert to Islam."

Hurmuzân accepted Islam at once. Umar Fâruq ؓ grew very happy. He gave Hurmuzân a place in Al-Madinah to live in and sanctioned for him an annual grant of two thousand dinars. He was also consulted during the campaigns of Persia.

Umar Fâruq ؓ then said to Anas bin Mâlik and Ahnaf bin Qais ؓ, "You people perhaps fail to treat your *Dhimmi* (non-Muslim citizens of an Islamic state) well. And the result is their uprisings time and again." They submitted, "O Chief of the believers, we make it a point to treat them extremely well and hold them in high regard. However, they rise against us again and again because you have held us back from going ahead. Yezdgird, the Persian Emperor is there in his cities and while he is safe and sound, the Persians will never sit back and abandon their fighting." The Caliph agreed and issued immediate orders for the Muslim forces to march ahead.

### The Conquest of Egypt

During Umar Fâruq's stay in Jerusalem, Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ had obtained his consent for launching an attack on Egypt. Amr ؓ marched to Egypt at the head of four thousand troops. The Caliph of Islam put before Muqauqis, the king of Egypt, three conditions: Islam or *Jizyah* or battle, in his dispatch from Al-Madinah. The Roman general Artabun along with his entire army was in Egypt at that time. First Artabun moved forward and then fled the battlefield after experiencing a decisive defeat.

Afterwards the Muslim army advanced further and laid siege around Ainu Shams and from there dispatched two squadrons to besiege Farama and Alexandria (Iskandariyah). Both the cities fell to the Muslim troops. Amr bin Âs ؓ then sent Zubair bin Al-Awwâm ؓ to Fustât as a commander, he conquered the fortified citadel after a heavy encounter. Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ attacked Alexandria, which fell after a siege of three months.

## **The Battle of Nahāwand**

After the conquest of Madā'in and Jalula, Yezdgird shifted to Rey and then to Isfahān. When Ahwāz fell to the Muslims, he fled to Marw in Khurasān located in eastern Persia. He built a fire temple there and was satisfied that the Arabs would not make any advancement. He became full of rage after Ahwāz was destroyed, and Hurmuzān was captured and taken to Al-Madinah. He again started huge military preparations for beating the Muslims and wrote letters to the notables from the surrounding areas putting them to shame over the successive Muslim victories.

These efforts of Yezdgird bore fruit and Tabaristān, Jurjān, Khurasān, Isfahān, Hamadān, and Sindh rose against the Muslims in great fervor. Fighters from various regions rushed to join Yezdgird. He put Firoz or Mardān Shah as a commander of a one-hundred-and-fifty-thousand-man army and dispatched it to Nahāwand. On receiving this news, Umar Fāruq ❀ decided to lead the army himself. However, Ali, Uthmān and Talhah ❀ differed with his decision and the Caliph honored their opinion.

He then nominated Nu'mān bin Muqarrin ❀ as commander and instructed him to go and halt at a stream near Kufah. At that time Sa'd bin Abu Waqqās ❀ was in Al-Madinah at the invitation of the Caliph. The Caliph wrote to Abdullah bin Abdullah bin Utbān, the deputy of Sa'd ❀ to dispatch forces from Kufah under the command of Nu'mān bin Muqarrin ❀. The order was immediately implemented. The Caliph also instructed the Muslim troops stationed in Ahwāz to blockade Persia and Isfahān so that the people of Nahāwand could not get any help from Persia.

When troops from other corners gathered together Nu'mān bin Muqarrin ❀ put his brother Nu'aim bin Muqarrin at the vanguard, gave the right flank to Hudhaifah bin Yamān ❀, left flank to Suwaid bin Muqarrin, the infantry to Qa'qā' and rearguard to Mujāshi' bin Mas'ud. The total number of Muslim troops reached thirty thousand. The army marched from Kufah and halted at a place nine miles from its destination. The Persian army also came out on the field.

The battle started on Wednesday and continued until Thursday but without any decision. On Friday, the Persians moved back to the city and fortified areas. Since they had strewn *Gokhru* (iron-thorns) around the entire city obstructing the movement of the Muslim army towards the ramparts of the city, while the Persians could charge at the Muslim troops at anytime. In the wake of the new developments, Nu'mân summoned the commanders to his camp and sought their opinion about dealing with the situation. Tulaihah bin Khuwailid gave his opinion that the Muslim army, alert and ready, should make a retreat about six to seven miles from the city. And as a next step, Qa'qâ' be asked to charge at them with a column. The suggestion was unanimously agreed upon.

When the Persians noticed a small force before them, they became overjoyed and came out to attack it in full force. The Muslim column, according to plan, kept gradually moving back, while the Persians continued their pressure on the Muslims and moved ahead. They were now at a long distance from their trenches and defensive devices and were caught unaware by the large and fresh Muslim army lying in wait for their arrival. Nu'mân bin Muqarrin along with others launched a fierce attack on the Persians with the loud cry of *Allâhu Akbar* (Allâh is the Most Great). The enemy force was thoroughly outwitted, they fled the field leaving a large number of soldiers dead and injured.

During the rage and fury of the killing of the Persians, Nu'mân bin Muqarrin fell down from his horse badly exhausted and injured and was martyred. His brother Nu'mân bin Muqarrin appeared on the scene and put on his dress and took the standard of Nu'mân and the Muslim army remained unaware until the end of the battle about the martyrdom of their commander. The fleeing Persian soldiers were entrapped by the *Gokhru* spread by themselves, which took a toll in thousands. The Persian commander and other commanding officers escaped to Hamadân, but Nu'mân and Qa'qâ' conquered Hamadân too. Hudhaifah bin Yamân was then appointed commander of the Muslim army, and in that capacity he distributed the spoils of war in Nahâwand and put out the fire temple. Its high priest waited upon Hudhaifah and offered to put him in possession of priceless

treasures if his own life and property were spared. Hudhaifah was very willing to accede to this proposal, the priest accordingly brought and placed before him precious stones of the rarest value from the royal treasure kept with him for emergencies. Hudhaifah distributed the spoils of war among the troops and dispatched one-fifth, together with the precious stones to the Caliph.

For a couple of days the Caliph had received no news from the seat of war and was worried. However, he grew overjoyed at the arrival of the messenger, Sâ'ib bin Al-Aqra' with the tidings of the victory and one-fifth of the booty together with the precious stones. Umar Fâruq deposited the precious stones with the public treasury and sent Sâ'ib back. Sâ'ib had hardly stepped in Kufah when a messenger of the Caliph came chasing him and brought him back to Al-Madinah. Umar Fâruq revealed, "I had a dream that the angels were threatening me with torment of Fire for depositing the gems and jewels in the public treasury. So I will never preserve them in the public treasury. Take these with you and distribute among the troops their price after selling them all." When Sâ'ib sold those jewels to Amr bin Huraith Makhzumi in Kufah, they fetched two hundred thousand dirhams which were distributed among the Muslim troops. Umar Fâruq's murderer, Abu Lulu was a citizen of Nahâwand and was captured in the same battle.

### **General Conquest of Persia**

The fall of Nahâwand was followed by that of Hamadân but the latter rose in revolt after only a few days. Being fed up with the continual revolts of the Persian regions, Umar Fâruq later ordered a general attack.

Isfahân forms the first link in a chain of conquests. Nu'aim bin Muqarrin conquered Rey and Azerbaijân after a bloody battle. Suwaïd bin Muqarrin, the brother of Nu'aim bin Muqarrin won Qumis. Isphandiyar, the brother of Rustam, was held by Utbah and released on the promise of paying the *jizyah*. He then conquered Jurjân and then the entire province of Tabaristân fell to the Muslims. Bukair then conquered Armenia. Baida and Khazar were conquered by Abdur-Rahmân bin Rabi'ah.

Āsim bin Umar ﷺ conquered the province of Seistān and Suhail bin Adi took Kirmān. Hakam bin Amr Taghlabi ﷺ won victory in Makrān, (Baluchistān) and after a severely contested conflict Rāsāl, the king of Makrān was defeated. Hakam bin Amr's dispatch to the Caliph communicating the news of the victory also was accompanied by a few elephants, which were captured in the spoils. Umar Fāruq ﷺ inquired from Sahār Abdi ﷺ, the messenger, about the particulars of Makrān and then issued an order instructing Hakam bin Amr ﷺ to stop his forward advances.

It has already been mentioned that Yezdgird was stationed in Khurasān and a full-scale battle was anticipated, Umar Fāruq ﷺ enforced Ahnaf bin Qais ﷺ by several squadrons headed by seasoned and brave commanders. When these fresh reinforcements joined Ahnaf ﷺ, he made Balkh the target of a severe attack. Yezdgird tasted ruinous defeat and fled to Turkistān. Ahnaf ﷺ captured all of Khurasān and made Marwarod the seat of power. Umar Fāruq ﷺ praised Ahnaf ﷺ for his high spirits and deeds of valor but as to his seeking permission for further advancement, the Caliph wrote back, "Would that a river of fire intervened between us and Khurasān." He meant that expansionist policy was not a good thing. So, he instructed Ahnaf ﷺ to stop where he was and advance no further.

When Yezdgird reached Farghāna, Khāqān, the Emperor of China held him in high esteem and accompanied Yezdgird towards Khurasān at the head of a huge army. Khāqān invaded Marwarod, while Yezdgird charged at Marw-Shahjahān. Khāqān was defeated in his conflict with Ahnaf bin Qais ﷺ and he fled back to Farghāna after losing some of his renowned men in the fray. With the flight of Khāqān, Yezdgird raised the siege of Marw-Shahjahān and despairing of victory, he gathered all his treasure and resolved to proceed to Turkistān. Noticing that luck was not in favor of Yezdgird, his courtiers turned against him and despoiled him of all his vast riches. Shorn of his entire splendor, Yezdgird fled to Khāqān and lived at Farghāna, the Khāqān's capital. When Umar Fāruq ﷺ heard of the victory, he assembled all the citizens of Al-Madinah to the Prophet's Mosque and gave them the glad tidings in a powerful oration, the gist of which is given below:

"The empire of the Magians has become extinct this day and from now on they will not possess a span of land to injure the Muslims in any way. Allāh the Almighty has made you master of the Magians, their country, their riches and their properties in order to test your deeds and actions. Muslims do keep in mind not to admit any change in your way of life otherwise, Allāh the Almighty will take the sovereign power from you and give it to others."

A few days after this, the sad event of the martyrdom of Umar Fāruq ؓ took place in Al-Madinah.

### **Famine and Plague**

During the last days of 17 AH, plague broke out in Iraq, Syria and Egypt and became intense in the early days of 18 AH. Along with this, famine also overtook the Arabian territory. Scarcity of food made life miserable. Umar Fāruq ؓ rose to the occasion with might and main and showed amazing and exemplary readiness, courage and skill in handling the situation. He immediately issued a volley of letters to the governors to rush food grains to the people of Al-Madinah. In response to this order, Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ dispatched from Egypt twenty ships laden with food grains, and Umar Fāruq ؓ himself proceeded to the port to take the delivery and preserve the goods in a protected warehouse. He then prepared a list of the needy and distributed among them food grain according to their need. He vowed not to use butter and milk while the people were under the stress of famine.

Hearing the news of plague spreading in Syria, Umar Fāruq ؓ himself came out and proceeded towards the Islamic army there. He had been at Sargh when Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrāh ؓ and other commanders and military officers received him with honor. Some of the Companions requested him not to move any further. Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf ؓ said that he had heard the Prophet ﷺ to have said, "Go not to the place where an epidemic has broken out, and retreat not from the place already in the grip of an epidemic." Hearing this *Hadith*, Umar Fāruq ؓ came back to Al-Madinah, instructing the authorities to handle the situation with utmost care and caution. Thus they sprang into action and took all the precautionary measures at

their command. Abu Ubaidah ؓ was then stationed in a low-lying area but as per the order of Umar ؓ, carried his army to Jābiah, which had a healthier climate.

However, Abu Ubaidah ؓ fell victim to the plague at Jābiah and appointed Mu'adh bin Jabal ؓ commander in his place, and succumbed to the disease. Mu'adh bin Jabal ؓ also did not live long and the fatal disease took a toll of Mu'adh ؓ, and his son was cut down in the prime of his life. Mu'adh appointed Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ his successor before his final departure. Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ climbed a high mountain along with his soldiers and encamped in small groups. After sometime the rage of the epidemic receded. However, this epidemic took a heavy toll of life and some of the distinguished personages of Islam were removed from the scene. As a result of this, the flood of victories came to a sudden halt.

The same year, 18 AH, the Caliph appointed Shuraih bin Hārith Kindi and Ka'b bin Suwr Azdi judges (*Qādi*) of Kufah and Basrah respectively. Umar Fāruq ؓ built houses and dug wells between Makkah and Al-Madinah for the welfare of the public, he extended the courtyard of the Ka'bah by purchasing adjoining houses.

### **The Conquests of Umar Fāruq ؓ**

The conquests cited above include Persia, Iraq, Jazirah, Khurasān, Baluchistān, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Armenia. And the conquests, which were made during the decade long Fāruqi Caliphate were not ordinary. The provinces carved by Umar Fāruq ؓ himself in 22 AH, were Makkah, Al-Madinah, Syria, Jazirah, Basrah, Kufah, Egypt, Palestine, Khurasān, Azerbaijān and Persia. Some of them were equal to two provinces in area with two centers of power and separate governors and their administrations.

### **Martyrdom of Umar Fāruq ؓ**

There was a Persian origin Christian slave named Firoz in Al-Madinah whose patronymic (literally 'father of' and then usually 'the name of the first born son') was Abu Lulu. One day he came across Umar ؓ in the marketplace and complained that his master



Mughirah bin Shu'bah had imposed upon him a very heavy tax and begged the Caliph to prevail upon his master to reduce the same. Umar asked him the amount of the tax. He replied that it was two dirhams per day. The Caliph then asked him his trade. "I work as a carpenter, a painter and an ironsmith," he replied. The Caliph said, "The amount is not that much considering these lucrative vocations." This decision did not suit Firoz and he grew displeased. Umar Fâruq then said to him that he had heard that he (Firoz) could make windmills, and would he make one for him. "Very well, I shall make for you such a mill whose sound will be heard by the west and the east."

The next day when the people assembled in the mosque to perform the morning prayer, Firoz came into the mosque armed with a poisonous dagger. As the ranks of the congregation were put straight and in order, and Umar came up and took his position at the head of the ranks to lead the prayer, Firoz suddenly rushed from the first rank and struck Umar six consecutive blows, one of which fell below his navel. Umar instantly caught hold of Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf, and ordered him to take his place and he, unable to stand the wounds, fell down unconscious on the floor. Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf led the prayer while Umar lay stabbed and mangled.

Abu Lulu wounded other persons also besides putting Kulaib bin Al-Bukair to martyrdom. At last he was arrested but committed suicide simultaneously. After performing the *Fajr* prayer, they carried Umar home. "Who is my assassin?" were the first words, which escaped Umar's lips after regaining consciousness. "Abu Lulu," replied the people. "Praised be to Allâh that I am not killed by a man who called himself a Muslim or performed even a single prostration before Allâh," Umar said with a sense of satisfaction.

A physician was sent for, who administered to him a date cordial and milk. Both these, however, gushed forth from the wounds whereupon the people realized that he would not survive. They accordingly asked him to nominate his successor as Abu Bakr had done. He sent for Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf, Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs, Zubair bin Awwâm, Talhah, Ali, and Uthmân bin Affân. Talhah was somewhere outside Al-Madinah. Umar Fâruq said addressing those five persons: "Keep waiting for Talhah for three days: If he

returns within this period, he is included in the panel otherwise you should choose your caliph from among yourselves." Thereafter he called his son, Abdullah bin Umar ؓ and said, "If they are divided in their choice for the caliph, you should side with the majority and if the two groups show equal number, you join the group which has Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf on its side."

He then called Abu Talhah Ansāri and Miqdād bin Aswad ؓ and ordered them to be at the door while the panel was in session and let nobody in until the deliberations were over. Following this he said addressing the panel members, "I leave my will for the person who is chosen to the post of the caliph that he should take particular care of the rights of the *Ansār*, for they are those who lent their support to the Prophet ﷺ, let the *Muhājirin* stay in their houses. The *Ansār* happen to be your benefactors and so they deserve your obligation. You should mostly overlook their faults and ignore their mistakes. Anybody being elected as caliph, should pay attention to the *Muhājirin* too, for they are the root of Islam. Fulfill the responsibilities regarding the *Dhimmi* and any promise made to the *Dhimmi* must be honored, their enemies should be kept away and they should never be asked to do anything beyond their power."

Having done with public affairs, Umar ؓ turned attention towards his private concerns. He asked his son Abdullah ؓ to go to Aishah ؓ and tell her that he begged permission from her to be buried by the side of the Prophet ﷺ. Abdullah ؓ accordingly waited upon Aishah ؓ whom he found weeping. He conveyed to her the greetings and the message of Umar ؓ. She said, "I had a mind to reserve this place for myself but today I will accord Umar precedence over myself." Abdullah ؓ now hastened back to his father who eagerly inquired: "What news bring you to me, O my son?" "That which will give you satisfaction," rejoined Abdullah ؓ. "It was the greatest wish of my life," said Umar ؓ, the Caliph of Islam and Chief of the believers.

He was wounded on Wednesday, Dhul-Hijjah 27, 23 AH, and died and was buried on Muharram 1, 24 AH. His tenure as caliph was ten and a half years. Suhaib ؓ led his funeral prayer. Ali, Zubair, Uthmān Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf and Abdullah bin Umar ؓ lowered his body into the grave and performed the burial service.

## **Wives and Children**

The first wife he married in his state of Ignorance was Zainab, daughter of Maz'un bin Habib bin Wahb bin Hudâfah bin Jumh who gave birth to Abdullah, Abdur-Rahmân (elder) and Hafsah. Zainab embraced Islam in Makkah and died in the same city. She was the sister of Uthmân bin Maz'un who was one of the earliest Muslims and was the fourteenth to embrace Islam.

His second wife, Mulaikah, daughter of Jarwal Khuzâ'i, was also married in the state of Ignorance, who gave birth to Ubaidullah. Since she refused to accept Islam, she was divorced in 6 AH. His third wife was Qaribah, daughter of Abu Umayyah Makhzumi who was also married in the state of Ignorance and was divorced in 6 AH, after the conclusion of the Truce of Hudaibiah because of her rejection of Islam. His fourth marriage was solemnized with Umm Hakim, the daughter of Al-Hârith bin Hishâm Makhzumi who gave him Fatimah and his fifth wife was Jamilah, the daughter of Âsim bin Thâbit bin Abu Aflah Ausi Ansâri to whom Âsim was born, but she too was divorced for certain reasons.

His sixth marriage was performed with Umm Kulthum, the daughter of Ali who gave birth to Ruqayyah and Zaid. Among the children of Umar Fâruq, Hafsah and Abdullah were much renowned. Hafsah was married to the Prophet and Abdullah bin Umar accompanied the Prophet in all the battles. Umar also had other wives, namely Âtikah, the daughter of Zaid bin Amr bin Nufail. Âtikah was the cousin of Umar. Fukaihah Yemenia is also reckoned among the wives of Umar. Some people have written that she was his slave-girl who gave birth to Abdur-Rahmân (the middle one).

## **Accomplished Firsts by Umar Fâruq**

Umar Fâruq invented and enforced many things in the sphere of financial, political, administrative and social spheres, which are known as accomplishments first instituted by him. Some of them are mentioned below:

He set up a formal *Bait-ul-Mâl* or public treasury and introduced the Hijri calendar, he adopted the appellation of *Amir-ul-Mo'minin* (Chief of the believers), he established a regular department for the military and a separate department for financial affairs and fixed the salaries for men in voluntary services. He also introduced the practice of measuring the land and keeping its record, adopted a census system, he had canals dug and populated cities like Kufah, Basrah, Jizah, Fustât (Cairo) and delineated provinces out of the occupied territories.

He was first to allow rival country's traders to come to Muslim territories for the purpose of business. He was also the first to make use of the whip for corporal punishment and set up a prison and police department. He introduced a system of collecting direct information concerning states and conditions of the masses, he established a secret intelligence service, he had wells bored, built houses and fixed a daily allowance for the destitute among the Christians and the Jews. Moreover, it was from his original planning to make arrangements for congregational *Tarâwih* prayers, he levied *Zakât* on horses for trading purposes and started four *Takbir* for the funeral prayer.

### **Various Conditions and Special Features**

Umar Fîruq ؓ lived on simple and coarse food. Messengers from outside Al-Madinah stayed with the Caliph and dined with him as his guest. They felt uneasy for they were not in the habit of living on such simple foods. His dress was also simple to the extreme. He would most often wear clothes with a number of patches. At times he had leather patches on his cotton shirts. On one occasion he remained in his home, while the people waited for him outside. On his coming out they understood that he had no clothes to wear. He had washed the one outfit he possessed and until it dried, he could not come out.

After *Hijrah* (migration), he lived in a village two to three miles away from Al-Madinah. After becoming caliph, he shifted to Al-Madinah and settled in a house located near the Prophet's Mosque between *Bâb-us-Salâm* and *Bâb-ur-Rahmah*. He was in debt at the time of his death. He ordered the debt to be paid by selling his residential house. Mu'âwiyah ؓ purchased the house and the debt was thus settled.

He once said in his address: "People! There was a time when I used to bring water for others and in return for that they gave me dates to live on." When the people said what was the need of narrating such things. He replied, "I felt a shade of pride over myself and it was the most suitable cure." He so often made journeys between Al-Madinah and Makkah but never took with him a tent or any type of shelter. When he needed rest, he would spread a mantle under an acacia tree and lay on it. When overcome by sleep, he used to collect pebbles and sand to make a pillow to put his head on. He fixed payments from the public treasury for the wives of the Prophet ﷺ, the Companions of Badr, those who took the pledge of Ridwān and all the elite and distinguished Companions. When he fixed the payment for Usāmah more than his son, Abdullah ﷺ raised an objection. He then said to his son, "The Prophet ﷺ loved Usāmah more than you and his father more than your father."

Umar Fāruq's fellows and advisors were all religious scholars and there was no consideration for age. He held them in high esteem. Knowledge of men and their mettle was among his traits. He was also fully aware of special traits in various Companions and earned their services accordingly. While choosing persons to shoulder the responsibilities of governing, commanding, administering, and other important posts, he was never influenced by mere piety and divinity but he based his choice on skill and suitability.

During his decade long caliphate, hundreds of battles were fought in Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Khurasān. He did not take part in any of these battles, nevertheless the strategies were decided and the necessary arrangements were made by him. All the battles were fought under the instructions of Umar Fāruq ﷺ and no one can point out any flaw in any of his judgement or instruction. He had instructed all provincial governors that no soldier should be kept from going home for more than four months in succession.

He was once advised to use honey to cure some disease, but he had no honey with him nor could any be had from anywhere else. However, it was stocked in the public treasury. The people advised him to take it from there. He argued that it was the property of the people and so he could not take it without their permission.

One day he washed the wounds of the camels and said that he was afraid of being questioned about their condition on the Day of Judgment. He once asked Salmân ؓ whether he was a king or a caliph. He replied that if he collected from someone a dirham, or more or less than that, and spent it unnecessarily, he was a king otherwise, he was a caliph.

Even after being the Caliph for a long time, he had taken nothing from the public treasury, with the result he came under the stress of starvation. Finding no way out he assembled the people in the Prophet's Mosque and said that since he remained preoccupied with the affairs of the caliphate, he found no time to look after his personal needs. So, he requested them to fix something from the public treasury. Ali ؓ said that he should get only two meals per day from the public treasury, which he accepted without question.

Abdullah bin Umar ؓ said, "It never happened that Umar fell in anger and his fury was not subsided at the mention of Allâh's Name or on making him afraid of Allâh or on reciting any Verse of the Qur'ân." Bilâl ؓ once asked Aslam ؓ about Umar ؓ and he replied, "He is, undoubtedly, the best of all but when he grows angry, it is nothing short of a calamity." Bilâl ؓ said, "Why don't you recite any Verse at that time and his anger will totally subside?"

Umar Fâruq ؓ once sent Sâriyah at the head of a military detachment. Some time after that during a public address he cried, "O Sâriyah! Go to the mountain side." After sometime a messenger came to Al-Madinah from the place of battle and gave an account of the battle. During his narration he said, "We were about to be defeated when we heard someone calling out thrice, 'O Sâriyah! Go to the mountain side.' Because of this, our enemy was defeated."

When those words were uttered by Umar Fâruq ؓ in his Friday address, some people among the audience had said, "You are giving your call to Sâriyah here while he is engaged in fighting with the disbelievers in Nahâwand." Whereupon he had said, "It was such a scene at that time that the Muslims appeared engaged in fighting and it was essential for them to look towards the mountain. Thus came out from my tongue those words." When the messenger of Sâriyah came

to Al-Madinah with his letter, the event was mentioned therein referring to the day and time exactly, which corresponded to the date and time of Umar's address.

Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf ؓ once said to him: "They fear you so much that they can't look towards you nor can they move their lips." Umar Fâruq ؓ replied, "By Allâh, I fear them more than they fear me."

Umar Fâruq ؓ had issued orders to the governors to perform the *Hajj* during the *Hajj* season and he himself used to be present there on those occasions. The wisdom behind such a practice was that he wanted to give an opportunity to everyone to meet him and place before him anything against their governors and they (the governors) should be ready to give an explanation for their behavior. As a result of this, the governors kept alert lest they were taken to task before the public for their actions. Thus he laid the foundation of a true democracy and real equality.

## **The Summary of Conquests**

The area of the conquests of Umar Fâruq ؓ is said to have spread over 22.5 hundred thousand square miles. This was the result of victories won by a wretched and small people against the mighty empires of Persia and Rome.

The Roman Empire had in its fold the Balkan Peninsula, Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Sudan. Some years back the Persian Empire had gained such a strength that it invaded victoriously in the Syrian region reaching the waters and up to Egypt after defeating the Roman Empire. The Persians had no less countries under their rule than the Romans. Those two magnificent empires ruled over the Western and the Eastern world and there was no third force to make a challenge to their might.

Christian and non-Muslim historians account for the rapid and vast Muslim conquests by the fact that both the Roman and Persian Empires were at that time in decay, with the result the Muslims had an opportunity to conquer both these powers. But, while giving reasons for the fall of both these mighty Empires, they forget to tell about the position of the Muslim State as compared to the giants of

the East and the West in decay. Moreover, when they came in conflict with the Muslim forces, their mutual enmity was not at its peak. Thus each of them was in a position to mobilize massive forces against the numerically weak Muslim power.

Besides, the single Muslim force had to face the two giants simultaneously, both of them were not only mighty but also the most civilized and advanced in all respects. Both of them were old powers having well-disciplined regular forces armed to the teeth and with the most developed weapons and advanced art of warfare of the age. In administrative skills and experience they were far ahead of the Arabs and the Muslims. Again, both the powers could easily mobilize two-hundred-thousand-man armies at a time with about the same number of soldiers at their back, while the greatest number of Muslim troops never reached beyond thirty to forty thousand. The results were always the same, defeat for the anti-Islamic forces.

The fact behind the reverses and repulses of the Roman and Persian forces can be examined by their lack of true faith. The Muslims were the followers of *Tauhid* (Oneness of God). Lack of Faith leads to timidity while Faith makes one brave. *Tauhid* and *Imân* (Faith) instilled in the Arabs the courage of conviction, which is the logical consequence of Faith and which cannot be dominated by anything however mighty and powerful that it might be. Moreover, the principles of governance that the Qur'ân and the Prophetic examples taught to the Muslims could not be matched in the least by the developed powers of Persia and Rome.

Whenever the Muslim army halted for a few days, the populace of that territory rose to welcome the Muslims as providers of peace and prosperity. When the defeated nations watched with their naked eyes, the blessings of peace, morality, divine affection, justice, mercy, courage and the ambition of their victories, they put themselves at their service. It is an undeniable fact of history that humanity saved itself only through the marching steps of the Arab forces. Again, the unbreakable unit and the sense of supreme sacrifice, which Islam created in the Companions, could not be achieved by powers antagonistic to Islam.



## **First Half of the Rightly-Guided Caliphate**

After the Prophet ﷺ, the periods of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and Umar Fâruq ؓ may be called the first half of the religious and spiritual rule of Islam, the Rightly-Guided Caliphate. The prominent feature of this period is that the material world nowhere dominates the Faith. Vested interests, relationships and friendships were not allowed to influence the work that had to be done at anytime. The people brought up under the loving care and spiritual guidance of the Prophet ﷺ dominated the scene everywhere. They were held in high esteem by everyone and worked as torchbearers. There was no trace of disunity and discord among the Muslims. Everywhere they were known for their piety, purity, simplicity and honesty.

The marching steps of the Muslim troops trampled Iraq, Syria and Egypt but, up to the end of the Fâruqi Caliphate, the Muslim conquerors were not influenced in the least by the extravagant habits and luxurious living of the Christians and the Magians. Muslim armies conquered Iraq and Persia but the conquerors used to stay under the thatched roofs and tents of Kufah and Basrah. Similarly, the conquerors of Syria hated to live in Syrian cities and preferred the deserts and hills to safeguard their simplicity and austerity. They never said goodbye to their martial prowess and life of strain, trials and tribulations, endurance and sacrifice. Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and Umar Fâruq ؓ not only took pains to make them habituated to a life of struggle and physical and spiritual exercise but they left before them the highest quality of personal examples to follow and be guided by.

They neither spent a single penny from the public treasury nor let others do it. The caliphs of Islam had no personal concern nor ever made any attempt for personal gain. But during the second half of the Rightly-Guided Caliphate, these qualities of head and heart appeared to be gradually receding and with them ended the Righteous Caliphate.

## Second Half of the Rightly-Guided Caliphate

### Uthmân bin Affân

#### Name and Pedigree:

His family lineage is Uthmân bin Affân bin Abu Al-Âs bin Umayyah bin Abd Shams bin Abd Munâf bin Qusai bin Kilâb bin Murrah bin Ka'b bin Luai bin Ghâlib. His appellation was Abu Amr in the state of Ignorance. However, after confessing Islam, he married Ruqayyah, the daughter of the Prophet who gave birth to Abdullah, so his appellation changed to Abu Abdullah. The maternal grandmother of Uthmân was the full sister of Abdullah bin Abdul-Muttalib, the father of the Prophet. Thus Uthmân was the cousin of the Prophet.

#### Excellences:

He was matchless in modesty. Zaid bin Thâbit reports the Prophet to have said, "When Uthmân once passed by me, one angel told me: 'I feel ashamed in front of him for the people will assassinate him.'" The Prophet said, "Angels show modesty to Uthmân as he shows it to Allâh and His Messenger." When someone mentioned Uthmân's modesty to Hasan, he remarked: "When Uthmân wants

to take a bath, he feels so much ashamed of taking off his clothes even after closing the doors that he is unable to stand erect." He migrated twice, to Abyssinia and Al-Madinah. He resembled the Prophet ﷺ in his physical appearance.

The Prophet ﷺ engaged the hand of his daughter Ruqayyah ﷺ to Uthmân ﷺ before his attainment of Prophethood. When she died on the day of the battle of Badr, he married his second daughter Umm Kulthum ﷺ to him. He is, therefore, known as "The Man of two Lights". She also died in 9 AH. No man in the world other than Uthmân ﷺ ever married two daughters of a Prophet. He knew more than anyone else about the rites of *Hajj*. He was the fourth man to embrace Islam.

He accepted Islam through the efforts of Abu Bakr ﷺ. He was very wealthy among the Companions and most generous. He spent lavishly in the way of Allāh. He could not take part in the battle of Badr due to the serious illness of Ruqayyah ﷺ and stayed behind in Al-Madinah with the permission of the Prophet ﷺ. However, he was given his share from the spoils of war equal to the participants. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Uthmân should be included among the Companions of Badr." He had a remarkable position among the Companions for his excessive prayers. He would sometimes stand in prayer the whole night and fasted for years. He had bought a piece of land adjacent to the Prophet's Mosque for the wives of the Prophet ﷺ.

Once famine broke out in Al-Madinah. Uthmân ﷺ rose to the occasion and distributed food grains among the needy. The Muslims of Al-Madinah once were suffering due to the scarcity of water. A Jew had a well but he used to sell water at a very high rate. He purchased the well from the Jew for thirty-five thousand dirhams and gave it for use by the Muslims at large. He never told a lie.

From the day he came to the fold of Islam, he would set one slave free every week. He never took pride in his being wealthy and never took wine even in the state of Ignorance. He would narrate the *Ahādith* with special care and precision. He gave in the way of Allāh six thousand camels and fifty horses for the expedition of Tabuk. He was reckoned among the richest men of Makkah in the Age of Ignorance.

## **Physical Appearance:**

He was a man of medium stature and his face was pockmarked. He had a thick beard and he colored it with henna. His bones were wide, complexion reddish, hands long, hair curled, shoulders wide and he had beautiful teeth.

## **Selection for Caliphate**

Umar Fāruq ؓ had, after allotting three days, asked Miqdād ؓ not to allow entry of anybody into the assembly of the nominated panel while it was in session except Abdullah bin Umar ؓ to make the number of the members of the panel odd, which would make it seven. However, the Caliph had already ordained that Abdullah ؓ must not be elected as caliph. In reply to a question he had explained that the burden of the caliphate was heavy enough to be carried by one person of the family and others must not be thrown into it to deprive him of many comforts of life. When Umar Fāruq ؓ was requested to nominate someone as caliph, he replied, "It would be valid for me if I nominate anyone as caliph following the way of Abu Bakr. However, if I were to nominate a caliph, he would be Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrāh, but he was departed before me; or he would be Sālim, the slave of Abu Hudhaifah, but he too died before me." Saying this, he set up a panel composed of six members, which have already been mentioned.

After the burial service was performed, Miqdād bin Al-Aswad ؓ and Abu Talhah ؓ appointed Suhaib ؓ as acting Caliph and Imam for three days as per the will left by Umar ؓ. Afterwards, they along with their men contacted Ali, Uthmān, Zubair, Sa'd, Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf and Abdullah bin Umar ؓ, and assembled them in the house of Miswar bin Makhramah ؓ or Aishah ؓ and sat down at the door. Talhah ؓ was still out of Al-Madinah. Meanwhile, Amr bin Al-Ās and Mughirah bin Shu'bah ؓ also came and sat down at the door. When Sa'd bin Abu Waqqās ؓ came to know of this, he came and made them leave the place so that they could not say they were included in the consultative body. When all the members arrived, Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf ؓ got up and said, "Who among those

nominated for the caliphate withdraws his name so that he may be given power to appoint the most excellent and suitable among you as caliph?" All the persons present kept silent. After a while he announced, "I give up my candidacy and I am ready to perform the duty of appointing a caliph." All of them agreed to it and empowered him to appoint the Caliph. However, Ali ؑ kept silent. When Abdur-Rahmān ؑ asked him about his silence, he said, "I agree with the opinion of other members, but, you first must promise to make your decision without any favor and personal involvement and do it with an eye on the truth and for the welfare of the whole *Ummah*."

Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf ؑ said, "I give my word that I will do it without showing any favor to anyone and without any personal involvement just for the sake of truth and for the welfare of the *Ummah*. But all of you should also promise to agree on the one who I choose for the post, and you will rise against one who disagrees with me." Having heard this, Ali ؑ and all those present said with one voice, "We all will lend support to your choice and help you in its enforcement."

With this promise on both sides, the session was over and the members went home and waited for three days for the final verdict. During this period, Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf ؑ kept meeting men of sound judgement and discussing the issue with them. He says that when he said to Uthmān ؑ in private, "In case I fail to pledge allegiance to you, whom will you offer me to do this." He replied, "You should pledge allegiance to Ali." Abdur-Rahmān ؑ then put the same question to Ali ؑ when he was alone, and he took the name of Uthmān ؑ. Abdur-Rahmān ؑ then asked Zubair ؑ to give his decision, he said, "Pledge your allegiance to either Uthmān or Ali." He then referred the issue to Sa'd ؑ in private, he took the name of Uthmān ؑ. When he took advice of other men of sound judgement, the majority appeared to be in favor of Uthmān ؑ.

On the night before the day of announcing the decision the members of the panel again assembled in the same house. Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf ؑ called Zubair and Sa'd ؑ separately in private and said, "Most of the people appear to be in favor of Uthmān and Ali." They too also favored the two. Abdur-Rahmān then talked to Uthmān and

Ali separately. The night ended and after the *Fajr* prayer the mosque was crowded with people, all of them were eagerly awaiting the announcement of Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf ؓ.

Before Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf ؓ could say anything, some persons other than the members of the panel began to speak in favor of this and that. Ammâr ؓ rose in favor of Ali ؓ while Ibn Abu Sarh and Abdullah bin Abu Rabi'ah thought Uthmân ؓ worthier than others. In such a crucial development, Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ؓ pressed Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf ؓ to make a hurried announcement lest some trouble might raise its head. Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf ؓ got up and said addressing the audience, "I did all within my power to know the opinion of all the groups and classes of people and nobody is now to go against my decision. All the members of the consultative body and nominated panel have already conceded to my decision and I have spent all my power to arrive at this decision." Saying this he called Uthmân ؓ near him and asked him to declare his resolve to follow the path shown by Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ and the Righteous Caliphs that passed away before him. Uthmân ؓ declared that he would try his level best to follow the commands of Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ and follow the examples of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and Umar Fâruq ؓ. Following this, Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf ؓ himself first pledged his allegiance to Uthmân ؓ and others followed suit.

At first Ali ؓ looked a little aggrieved at this sight and was about to move out of the mosque. But, he turned back in haste and moved towards the new Caliph passing through the rows and took *Bai'ah* at the hands of the Chief of the believers. Talhah ؓ was not present on the occasion and hence could not take part in the deliberations. When he called on Uthmân ؓ to pledge his allegiance, the latter told him that he was elected Caliph in his absence, for they could not wait any longer. Thus if he (Talhah) claimed the caliphate for himself, he (Uthmân) was ready to give it up in his favor. Talhah ؓ said, "I don't want to create any rift among the Muslims at this stage." Saying this he stretched his hand for taking *Bai'ah* at the hands of the new Caliph of Islam.

At the end of the *Bai'ah* session, Uthmân bin Affân ؓ came to the pulpit and addressing the congregation asked them to follow the

good deeds. He also asked them to fear the evil effects of abundant wealth and stressed on keeping the Pleasure of Allāh in view. After his preliminary address, he issued an order in the name of the governors and officers mentioning the demise of Umar Fāruq ؓ and his own election as the Caliph of Islam. All of them were enjoined to work with honesty and in good faith.

### **First Case in the Court of Uthmān ؓ**

A few days before the martyrdom of Umar Fāruq ؓ, Abu Lulu went to Hurmuzān with a dagger. He was the same man who had confessed Islam before the second Caliph of Islam and was settled in Al-Madinah. When Abu Lulu was talking to Hurmuzān, another inhabitant of Hirah, a Christian slave named Jafinah was also present. Abdur-Rahmān bin Abu Bakr ؓ noticed those three sitting together and conversing with each other. When Abu Lulu saw Abdur-Rahmān bin Abu Bakr ؓ approaching, he left the place in haste and his dagger fell down and he clearly witnessed it. However, he could not then notice the evil intention. But when Abu Lulu injured Umar Fāruq ؓ and was caught, Abdur-Rahmān ؓ recognized the dagger. He then related the whole event.

When Ubaidullah bin Umar ؓ, the second son of Umar ؓ heard all this, he lost control and attacked Hurmuzān. When Sa'd bin Abu Waqqās ؓ saw Hurmuzān being wounded and dying, he held Ubaidullah ؓ. Since no caliph was there and Suhaib ؓ was looking after the necessary affairs, Sa'd bin Abu Waqqās ؓ produced Ubaidullah ؓ before him. Suhaib ؓ kept the accused captive until the installation of the Caliph.

When Uthmān bin Affān ؓ was elected to the post of caliphate and preliminaries were accomplished, the case of Ubaidullah ؓ was put up before him. The new Caliph held consultations with the Companions. Ali ؓ gave his opinion that Ubaidullah ؓ should be slain by way of *Qisas* (death punishment for murder). But Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ opposed it tooth and nail. He argued that it was most improper to kill the son only a few days after the assassination of his father. The people in general supported the viewpoint of Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ.

The Caliph found himself in a fix. However, a subtle fact dawned upon him. The event belonged to neither his period of caliphate nor that of Umar ؓ, for it had taken place before he took charge of the caliphate. Thus he adopted the good device of paying the blood money by declaring himself the guardian of Ubaidullah ؓ, the accused. He then ascended the pulpit and made an effective speech and left his audience happy and satisfied.

## **Governors of the Provinces**

When Uthmân bin Affân ؓ was elected and installed as the Caliph of Islam, the following governors appointed by Umar Fâruq ؓ were looking after the affairs of the provinces and territories under the Muslim rule:

Nâfi' bin Abdul-Hârith in Makkah, Sufyân bin Abdullah Thaqafi in Tâ'if, Yala bin Umayyah in Yemen, Hudhaifah bin Mihsan in Oman, Mu'âwiyah bin Abu Sufyân in Damascus, Amr bin Al-Âs in Egypt, Umar bin Sa'd in Hims, Umar bin Utbah in Jordan, Abu Musa Ash'ari in Basrah, Mughirah bin Shu'bah in Kufah, Uthmân bin Abul-Âs in Bahrain.

The first action taken by the new Caliph in connection with the governors was that he deposed Mughirah bin Shu'bah ؓ from the governorship of Kufah and called him back to Al-Madinah. He was replaced by Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ؓ. When the people questioned the action, he replied, "I have not deposed Mughirah for any fault of his. I have rather done it as a part of the administration and an expediency and exactly according to the will left by Umar as he had personally mentioned this to me (Uthmân)."

## **Important events of Uthmân's Caliphate**

### **The Conquest of Alexandria**

Other than the conquest of Alexandria (Iskandariyah), during the first year of the caliphate of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ nothing else major occurred. Heraclius had taken refuge in Constantinople (Istanbul) after his flight from Asia Minor and Syria following the fall of Bait-ul-



Maqdis. Now he was worried about the safety of the rest of his territory after losing all hope of restoring the lost lands. In the wake of Amr bin Al-Âs' invasion of Egypt, Muqauqis, the king of Egypt had yielded Egypt and Alexandria to him after earning peace by paying the *Jizyah*. Heraclius considered Egypt his own province and Muqauqis his subordinate. Shock and terror engulfed him on all sides with the result that he died surrounded by defeat and dejection during the caliphate of Umar Fâruq ؓ. His son Qustuntin (Constantine) succeeded him and lost no time in mobilizing a huge army to restore Alexandria. However, Muqauqis prevented the Romans from making entry into Alexandria and thus kept his promise.

When the Muslims came to know of the Roman invasion, they came quickly from Fustât (Cairo). The Romans then turned their attack to the Islamic cantonments giving up their campaign for Alexandria. Both the armies came upon each other and a severe battle broke out. The commander of the Roman army was killed and a large number of Roman soldiers met the same fate. The rest barely reached Constantinople by boat. After the disastrous repulsion of the Roman forces, Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ made a survey of the losses suffered by the people of Alexandria and its suburbs and made up for all their losses, for he held himself responsible for saving the *Dhimmi* and compensating them for all reverses. Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ then lost no time in demolishing the ramparts around the city of Alexandria and then came back to his cantonment in Fustât. This was done to prevent the possibility of any Roman attack in future trying to turn Alexandria into a fortress. This event took place in 25 AH.

## **The Conquest of Armenia**

The Roman invasion of Alexandria was, in fact, the result of the demise of Umar Fâruq ؓ and the same event led to the uprising in the Persian territories of Hamadân and Rey. They declared their freedom from Muslim rule. Uthmân bin Affân ؓ dispatched Abu Musa Ash'ari, Bara' bin Âzib and Qarazah bin Ka'b ؓ to tackle the situation and they did their job appreciably well. Umar Fâruq ؓ had deposed and called back Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ؓ. Uthmân bin Affân ؓ reinstalled him as

governor of Kufah. Abdullah bin Mas'ud ؓ was then in charge of the public treasury.

Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ؓ, the governor of Kufah, borrowed some money from Abdullah bin Mas'ud ؓ, the treasurer. After a few days Abdullah ؓ demanded the borrowed money which Sa'd ؓ could not pay. The matter took a turn for the worse and their relations became strained. When Uthmân bin Affân ؓ came to know of this unfortunate development, he deposed Sa'd ؓ from the governorship of Kufah in 25 AH, and replaced him by Walid bin Uqbah bin Abu Mu'ait. Utbah bin Farqad ؓ who was appointed by Sa'd ؓ to look after the affairs of Azerbaijân was also deposed along with Sa'd ؓ. With his exit, the people of Azerbaijân raised their banner of revolt against the establishment. Walid bin Uqbah wasted no time in invading Azerbaijân and they were forced to earn peace on the old terms and agreed to pay *Jizyah*. Walid bin Uqbah, who was the governor of Jazirah during the caliphate of Umar Fâruq ؓ and at present the governor of Kufah, was the foster brother of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ. Since Sa'd ؓ was very pious and Allâh-fearing, and Walid bin Uqbah was not equal to him in this trait, the people of Kufah were not at all happy with the departure of Sa'd and the arrival of Walid.

Mu'âwiyah ؓ, the governor of Damascus had sent Habib bin Maslamah ؓ to Armenia. He conquered a number of cities and forts and forced the Romans to pay the *Jizyah*. With this news the Caesar of Constantinople collected eighty thousand troops from Malit, Siwas, and Quniah and invaded Habib bin Maslamah ؓ. Habib sent the account of these events to Mu'âwiyah ؓ and he gave the news to Uthmân bin Affân ؓ. The Caliph wrote Walid bin Uqbah, the governor of Kufah to dispatch ten thousand reinforcements to Armenia who immediately carried out the order with a dispatch of eight thousand troops headed by Salmân bin Rabi'ah to Armenia.

Habib bin Maslamah and Salman bin Rabi'ah jointly won Armenia and reached up to the Caucasus Mountains. On the return of Habib bin Maslamah ؓ to Mu'âwiyah ؓ in Damascus, the latter himself invaded the Roman territory. The Roman fighters escaped leaving Antâkiyah (Antioch) and their citadels behind. This event took place in 25 AH.

## Events and Changes in Egypt

Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ known as Ibn Abu Sarh was the foster brother of Uthmān bin Affān ؓ. During the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ he had renounced Islam but later confessed it wholeheartedly. Uthmān bin Affān ؓ sent him to Egypt as a governor and head of the public treasury while Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ was kept simply as a military officer. When relations among the military officers worsened, the Caliph deposed Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ and transferred the entire power of Egypt and Alexandria to Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ.

Although Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ was renowned among the brave horsemen of Arabia but Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ was far ahead in experience and popularity among the Egyptians who were shocked at the dismissal of Amr ؓ. Their anger and dissatisfaction resulted in their revolt against Abdullah bin Sa'd. Besides, when the Caesar of Constantinople heard of the deposition of Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ and the resulting uprisings in Egypt, he mobilized a huge army towards Alexandria under the command of a seasoned general. The Greeks in the city joined the camp of the Roman army and Alexandria fell to the Romans after slight resistance.

Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ was again sent to Egypt as a governor who launched such a fierce attack at the Romans that they had to flee from Alexandria after sustaining heavy losses and a heavy toll on their soldiers. Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ had conquered Egypt for the third time. Although he had vowed to raze the whole city to the ground after winning the battle, he forbade any such action. He rather built a mosque at the site where the massacre and plunder were called off.

Nevertheless, when peace and normalcy returned to the region and the administration was running smooth, Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ was once again deposed and replaced by Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ. This time the decision of the Caliph made Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ feel uneasy and uncomfortable over his reinstallation in Egypt, for his efforts to uphold the deteriorating situation of the region the last time had met with utter failure. However, he was now anxious to make amends for his past failures.

## The Conquest of Africa

Abdullah bin Sa'd ﷺ sought permission from Uthmān bin Affān ﷺ to invade Africa. Africa was then considered a country, it included the area stretching between Tripoli and Tangiers. Moreover, Africa was then considered the conglomeration of those countries, which make up the northern part of the African continent, Tripoli, Algiers, Tunis, and Morocco. Uthmān bin Affān ﷺ allowed him to do what he wanted. He marched towards his destination at the head of an army of ten thousand. He first brought the chiefs of Barqah to obey and they agreed to pay *jizyah*. The Muslim commander then advanced towards Tripoli capturing the territories falling on the way. At this stage the Caliph dispatched from Al-Madinah fresh reinforcements to lend help to Abdullah's army. The reinforcements included distinguished men like Abdullah bin Umar, Abdullah bin Abbās, Abdullah bin Zubair, Amr bin Al-Ās, Husain bin Ali, and Ibn Ja'far ﷺ.

When the detachment reached Barqah via Egypt, Abdullah bin Sa'd ﷺ welcomed it. Now they jointly proceeded towards Tripoli. The Romans tried to put up resistance but were repulsed. After the fall of Tripoli, the Muslim troops marched ahead. Gregory, the King of Africa was the vassal of Caesar. When he came to know of the march of the Muslim army, he mobilized one hundred and twenty thousand men and came face to face with the Muslim forces. Abdullah bin Sa'd ﷺ first invited Gregory to accept Islam. When Gregory flatly refused the invitation, he asked him to pay the *jizyah*. When he rejected that also, the Muslim army drew up ranks and a fierce battle broke out, which remained indecisive. Fresh Muslim reinforcements appeared on the scene and the Muslim army called out *Allāhu Akbar*.

Since the distance between Al-Madinah and the seat of battle was so far, news could not be received immediately, so Uthmān bin Affān ﷺ sent a fresh detachment from Al-Madinah headed by Abdur-Rahmān bin Zubair ﷺ. When Gregory inquired of the slogan shouting by the Muslims, he was told that a fresh detachment had arrived and joined the Muslim forces. Gregory grew very anxious. However, the battle was not decided that day and both the armies withdrew to their

camps. The next day when the battle lines were again drawn Abdullah bin Sa'd ❀ was found missing. When Abdullah bin Zubair ❀ inquired about his absence, he was told that Gregory had proclaimed a reward of one hundred thousand dinars and the hand of his daughter to the man who would bring him the head of Abdullah bin Sa'd. For this reason Abdullah bin Sa'd ❀ failed to come to battlefield for fear of being a marked man. Abdullah bin Zubair ❀ went to his camp and asked Abdullah bin Sa'd to make a counter proclamation. He should offer a reward of one hundred thousand dinars from the booty, the hand of the daughter of Gregory and the conquered land to be governed by the man who would bring the head of Gregory.

With such a proclamation from Abdullah bin Sa'd ❀, Gregory found himself in great trouble. Abdullah bin Sa'd ❀ appeared on the battlefield. Both the armies fought gallantly but the battle remained inconclusive. When the night set in, consultations were held for adopting a new strategy. Abdullah bin Zubair ❀ suggested that half of the troops should go to battlefield and the rest remain inside the camp. When the two armies exhausted by the daylong fighting leave the battlefield for camp, the fresh half of the Muslim army should attack the retreating Romans. The counsel received general acceptance. The third day of the battle this strategy was put to practice. When the two armies separated in the afternoon, Abdullah bin Zubair ❀ rushed out from the camp with the fresh detachment and charged the Romans. They could not withstand the attack and fled to their camp but could not save themselves because the Muslim force surrounded the camp and the Romans were either killed or captured. Gregory also fought against the Muslims and was put to the sword by Abdullah bin Zubair ❀.

[It is said that the enemy forces had besieged the Muslim army, noticing this unfavorable condition, Abdullah bin Zubair ❀ took some brave Muslims with him and headed towards Gregory. The enemy took them as messengers from the Muslim army and let them go to the Gregory. They attacked and killed Gregory and raised his head on a spear. This scene uprooted the enemy and caused its destruction.]

The next day, Muslim army moved ahead and reached Sabitalah, the headquarters of (northern) Africa which was also conquered in a couple of days, and an immense amount of spoils fell into the hands of the Muslims. The Muslims marched further and laid siege around the fort of Jam, which was very strong and fortified. However, they could not stand the Muslim onslaught and yielded on the condition of paying one million as *Jizyah*. Abdullah bin Zubair ؓ set out to Al-Madinah with the glad tidings of the African conquest and one-fifth of the spoils. Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ returned to Egypt from Africa after an absence of one year and three months.

### **The Conquest of Cyprus and Rhodes**

Abdullah bin Nâfi' became the governor of Egypt the same year, 27 AH, that Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ came back to Egypt from the other parts of northern Africa. Constantine again rose to make military preparations for a fresh battle. In 28 AH, he dispatched a part of his navy towards Africa, which reached the African coast and demanded tribute for Caesar. But the Africans flatly refused to give any because Caesar had lent no help when they were under the Muslim attack and so they no longer held him as their ruler. This rude refusal led to fighting between the Africans and the Roman army, which resulted in the defeat of Africans. The Romans then advanced towards Alexandria. Abdullah bin Nâfi' was ready to give them battle. In the meantime Caesar himself set off to conquer Alexandria at the head of a fleet of six hundred boats. The Roman forces proceeded to Alexandria from both sides. A fierce fight took place, which ended with the destruction of the Romans. They escaped to Cyprus, which they used as their naval headquarters and an arsenal for their weapons.

At the time of the death of Umar Fâruq ؓ Mu'âwiyah ؓ was the governor of Damascus and Jordan while Hims and Qinnasrin were governed by Umair bin Saeed Ansâri. When he submitted his resignation after the demise of Umar Fâruq ؓ, Hims and Qinnasrin were consolidated with the province of Syria under Mu'âwiyah ؓ. Palestine was also consolidated with Syria under Mu'âwiyah ؓ after the death of Abdur-Rahmân bin Alqamah, the governor of Palestine. Mu'âwiyah ؓ gradually became the ruler of all the districts of Syria.

During the last days of the Fāruqī caliphate, Mu'āwiyah ؓ had sought permission to invade Cyprus from the Syrian coast. However, Umar Fāruq ؓ had some hesitation in giving permission for such a campaign and the matter remained undecided until Umar ؓ passed away. Uthmān bin Affān ؓ permitted the naval attack on condition that nobody was forced to take part in the adventure. Inspired by the efforts of Mu'āwiyah ؓ, a party agreed to invade Cyprus. The party included Abu Dhar Ghifāri, Abud-Darda', Shaddād bin Aus, Ubādah bin Sāmīt and his wife Umm Harām bint Milhān ؓ. Abdullah bin Qais ؓ was made the commander of the detachment, which left for Cyprus by boat. When Constantine escaped from Alexandria, he had taken refuge in Cyprus. An Islamic naval force chased him by boat from Egypt and reached Cyprus. And this fresh naval detachment from Syria also descended on the coast of Cyprus. When Umm Harām ؓ mounted on a horse, it ran away with her and she fell down and died. It happened exactly according to the prophecy of the Prophet ﷺ. Constantine could not withstand the attack and fled to Constantinople with great difficulties and succumbed to death.

However, according to other sources, frustrated by his defeat after defeat some people killed him in his bathroom. Thus Cyprus easily fell to the Muslims. Mu'āwiyah ؓ also arrived in Cyprus with a detachment. After finishing his job in Cyprus he sailed to Rhodes. There was a fierce battle but the Romans yielded after strong resistance. On this island there was a giant-like copper idol, one of its legs was on the coast of the island and another on a nearby islet off the coast. The strait between the two legs was so wide that ships would easily pass between them. Mu'āwiyah ؓ broke the idol into pieces and sent them with the troops going back to Alexandria where a Jew purchased them all. The conquests of Cyprus and Rhodes opened the door for Muslim campaigns against Constantinople and other countries of the region. These events took place at the end of 28 AH or at the beginning of 29 AH.

### **Administrative Changes in Persia**

In 27 AH, the people of Basrah sent a deputation to Al-Madinah to lodge a complaint against the governor Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ.



Uthmān bin Affān ~~was~~ immediately replaced him with his cousin, Abdullah bin Āmir bin Kurz bin Rabi'ah bin Habib bin Abd Shams, who was only 25 years old. The Caliph not only installed him as the governor of Basrah but also as the commander of the army of Oman and Bahrain, which until then was under Uthmān bin Abul-Ās Thaqafi. Ubaidullah bin Ma'mar, the governor of Khurāsān was now transferred to Persia. The governorship of Khurāsān was given to Umair bin Uthmān bin Sa'd who managed the affairs with skill and strong hands and captured the territory up to Farghāna. He, Umair bin Uthmān was deposed from the governorship of Khurāsān between 27 and 28 AH, and Ibn Ahmar was substituted for him. Abdur-Rahmān bin Abs was made the governor of Kirmān but was soon deposed making room for Asim bin Amr, while Imrān bin Nufail was brought to govern Sajastān.

### **Revolts of the Persians and the Islamic Conquests**

Since administrative changes took place rather quickly the Persians took it as a sign of providence and so they indulged in hatching conspiracies against the administration. They began to prepare for a fresh encounter with the Muslims. The centers of these uprisings and preparations were Istakhar and Jur. Ubaidullah bin Ma'mar, the governor of Persia invaded Istakhar in 27 AH, and was martyred in the encounter with the result the detachment under his command scattered and escaped. Hearing this, Abdullah bin Āmir, the governor of Basrah marched forward with his army with Uthmān bin Abul-Ās at the vanguard. Abdullah bin Amir turned towards Istakhar while Harim bin Haiyān laid siege around Jur. The Persians put up strong resistance but they ran away after a bloody battle and Istakhar fell to the Muslims.

Harim bin Haiyān's siege of Jur was protracted. During this period Haram fasted in the day and fought with the enemy too. He would broke his fast in the evening followed by prayers. Once he did not get bread after breaking the fast. He observed fast the next day in the same state. However, he did not get a meal that day either. The whole week passed in successive fasts without food. When he grew too weak he said to his servant, "What has happened to you my son. You



fail to give me bread and I am keeping fast with water alone for a week." He replied, "My master; I bake bread for you daily without fail, it is quite amazing that you didn't get it." The next day the servant baked bread and lay in wait to see who was taking it away. He was shocked to notice that a dog came and took the bread and made off with it. He followed the dog and saw that it went towards the fortification of the city and it entered the city through a sewer. The servant came back and related the whole event to Harim bin Haiyân. He too was amazed. Haram and a few adventurous persons went into the sewer, which led them inside the fortifications and they opened the gates after killing the watchmen. In this way the Muslim army made an easy entry into the city and conquered it. The uprisings both in Istakhar and Jur were heavily put down and the insurgents met their doom.

### **Hajj of 29 AH**

Uthmân bin Affân ؓ left Al-Madinah at the head of a party of the *Muhâjirin* and *Ansâr* to perform *Hajj* of the House of Allâh. He ordered the tents to be pitched in Mina and collected the pilgrims for the feast. However, the people disliked it for they thought it to be an act of *Bid'ah* (innovation) as it was not a practice during the time of the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and Umar Fâruq ؓ. During this same journey, a woman was produced before the Caliph. She was a widow who was married for a second time and she gave birth to a child within six months of the second marriage. Uthmân bin Affân ؓ sentenced her to be stoned to death. When Ali ؓ came to know of such a punishment, he called on the Caliph and said that Allâh the Almighty says in the Qur'ân:

"And the bearing of him and the weaning of him is thirty (30) months." (46:15)

It tells us that the duration of pregnancy and suckling goes up to thirty months. And the pregnancy period mentioned at another place in the Qur'ân is:

"The mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years." (2:233)

Now if suckling period, i.e., two years or twenty-four months is deducted from thirty months the pregnancy period comes to barely six months. Thus she cannot be accused of committing adultery. On hearing this, Uthmān bin Affān ؓ rushed someone to stop the punishment but she had already been stoned to death. Uthmān bin Affān ؓ expressed utmost sorrow over the incident and ordered recompense.

The same year, the Caliph brought about the expansion of the Prophet's Mosque by 160 yards in length and 150 yards in width and constructed pillars of stone.

### **Events of 30 AH**

Walid bin Uqbah was the governor of Kufah. The poet, Abu Zubaidah who was a Christian and later converted to Islam, kept company with him, even though he had not abandoned drinking even after accepting Islam. The people accused Walid bin Uqbah too of drinking wine and the complaint was lodged with the Caliph. The governor was called to Al-Madinah for an explanation. A group of the complainants also reached Al-Madinah.

When Walid appeared before the Caliph, the latter shook hands with him, which they resented. When the case of drinking was looked into, there was no eyewitness against the accused. For this reason the Caliph showed hesitation in giving him punishment. The others felt the Caliph favored him. At last, a witness got up and said, "Although I have not seen him drinking wine but I saw him vomiting wine." The Caliph, based on the testimony of this witness, ordered the accused to be whipped. Ali ؓ was also present on the scene. Abdullah bin Ja'far bin Abu Tālib began to whip Walid. When the number of strokes reached forty, Ali ؓ stopped it on the plea that even though Umar ؓ had ordered to whip eighty times which is right but Abu Bakr ؓ whipped forty times for the same crime, which I prefer to follow. Following this, Walid bin Uqbah was deposed from the governorship of Kufah, and Saeed bin Al-Ās replaced him. [Other sources like Tabari furnish details that the persons who complained and provided witness, were not reliable enough, but this fact was not disclosed at that time.]

## **The Event of Abu Dhar Ghifārī ؓ**

During 30 AH, the incident of Abu Dhar Ghifārī ؓ took place. He was in Syria under Mu'āwiyah ؓ. There arose a conflict between Abu Dhar Ghifārī and Mu'āwiyah ؓ over the meaning of the Verse:

"And those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allāh, announce unto them a painful torment."  
(9:34)

Abu Dhar ؓ was of the view that, according to this Verse, any deposit of money is unlawful and hence all the income should be duly spent in the way of Allāh. Mu'āwiyah ؓ, on the other hand, argued that spending in the way of Allāh refers to paying *Zakāt*, and the amount over which *Zakāt* has been paid, could be kept in deposit without incurring any breach of Islamic code. Had unconditional deposit of money been sinful, the Qur'ān would not have mentioned division of inheritance and shares thereof. When the people, particularly the younger section, came to know of the view advanced by Abu Dhar Ghifārī ؓ, they made fun of him. When the matter took a serious turn, Mu'āwiyah ؓ informed the Caliph about it. He wrote the governor to send Abu Dhar ؓ to Al-Madinah with due honor.

In Al-Madinah, he also set about propagating the same view. Since he was stern by nature, they began to avoid him, but the younger section of men would provoke him at times. In the meantime, Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf ؓ passed away. He was a wealthy person and one among the ten given glad tidings of Paradise during his lifetime. Someone reported to Abu Dhar Ghifārī ؓ that Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf ؓ had left behind riches in such a great quantity, so what did he have to say about it. He issued his familiar *Fatwa* (legal opinion) in the case. Thereupon, Ka'b Ahbār who had confessed Islam during the caliphate of Umar Fāruq ؓ and who was an accomplished scholar of the Children of Israel, objected to it. At this Abu Dhar ؓ lifted his stick and fell on him saying, "O Jew! What do you have to do with these issues?" Ka'b Ahbār fled to the assembly of the Caliph but Abu Dhar ؓ appeared there chasing him with his stick. The slaves of Uthmān bin Affān ؓ saved Ka'b Ahbār.

When Abu Dhar's anger subsided, he called on Uthmân bin Affân and said, "I believe that the entire possession should be given in the way of Allâh. The people of Syria opposed me and put me to trouble and now the people of Al-Madinah follow suit. Tell me what course should I adopt and where should I go?" Thereupon Uthmân bin Affân extended his suggestion, "You go and settle in a village outside Al-Madinah." So, Abu Dhar settled in Rabadhah, a village three days distance from Al-Madinah.

## **The Ring of the Prophet**

The Prophet had a ring which he used to seal his letters and orders. After the death of the Prophet, it was preserved with Âishah and then given to Abu Bakr Siddiq after he took over the caliphate. After the first Caliph, it was handed over to Umar Fâruq who entrusted it to his daughter and the Mother of the believers, Hafsa to be given to one chosen as Caliph. Thus when Uthmân bin Affân was elected as Caliph, the ring was given to him. The same year, 30 AH, the ring fell into a well at Quba. All efforts to find the lost ring proved an exercise in futility. From that day, Uthmân bin Affân had no peace in this life and remained surrounded by calamities of all kinds. He had another ring of the same shape and pattern made.

The number of persons joining congregational prayers particularly for *Jumu'ah* (Friday) rose to such an extent that they could not even hear the *Adhân*. Thus, the Caliph issued an order to pronounce an *Adhân* from a raised spot prior to the *Adhân* preceding the address. Thus two *Adhân* before the *Jumu'ah* (Friday) prayer came into practice. The same year Uthmân extended advice to the Companions to sell their properties in Iraq and Syria and buy in Makkah, Al-Madinah and Tâ'if.

## **Fall of Tabaristan**

Assuming governorship of Kufah, Saeed bin Al-Âs drew up an army which included men like Hasan bin Ali, Abdullah bin Umar, Abdullah bin Zubair, and Hudhaifah bin Al-Yamân. At the head of this army Saeed bin Al-Âs invaded Tabaristân and Jurjân and conquered these big cities and the entire territory.

## **Circulation of the Qur'ân**

When Hudhaifah bin Al-Yamân ؓ reached Al-Madinah on route to Basrah, Kufah, Rey and Syria, he expressed amazement over the fact that the people of Iraq, Syria, Basrah and Kufah, and Persia had their own way of recitation of the Noble Qur'ân which was quite different from each other. It was better that one and all were brought to the same way of recitation. Uthmân bin Affân ؓ convened a meeting of the distinguished Companions and placed the suggestion for their deliberations and decisions. All of them endorsed the opinion of Hudhaifah ؓ. Uthmân bin Affân ؓ then had them bring the copy of the Qur'ân with Hafsa ؓ, the Mother of the believers, which was compiled by Zaid bin Thâbit ؓ and other Companions during the caliphate of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and came to Umar Fâruq ؓ and then to his daughter, Hafsa ؓ after his assassination. The Caliph deputed a number of qualified people to prepare a number of copies. He then sent a copy of the Qur'ân to each big city with the order that the Qur'ân be copied accordingly and all the old copies be set on fire. When the fresh copy reached Kufah, the Companions expressed their joy over it, but Abdullah bin Mas'ud ؓ remained firm on his own recitation.

## **Events of 31 AH**

According to the fresh orders issued from the office of the caliphate, new governors were appointed to some territories. Harim bin Hassân Yashkuri, Harim bin Haiyân Al-Abdi, and Khirrit bin Râshid were appointed to the Persian territories. Ahnaf bin Qais was appointed to Marwain, Habib bin Qarrah Yarbu'i was appointed to Balkh, Khâlid bin Zuhair was appointed to Harât, Umain bin Ahmad Yashkuri to Tus and Qais bin Hubairah was appointed to Nishapur. Some of the cities of Khurâsan showed sign of uprisings. Abdullah bin Âmir ؓ resorted to military action and forced them all to obey. He then put down a revolt in Nishapur and then turned towards Harât followed by Balkh, Tabaristân, Kirmân, Sajastân and some provinces of Persia which became his next targets. In the wake of this series of victories in Iraq and Persia, Abdullah bin Âmir came to be known as a terror and people were filled with awe at the mention of his name.

## **Yezdgird killed**

The Persian Empire was destroyed during the caliphate of Umar Fāruq ؓ. The rest of the cities and frontier provinces were conquered during the caliphate of Uthmān bin Affān ؓ. Nevertheless, Yezdgird, the Emperor of Persia was still running from place to place for safety. Sometimes he was in Rey and sometimes in Balkh, Marw, Isfahān, Istakhar, Turkistan and China and back again to Persia. A party of several thousand soldiers remained with him through thick and thin in the hope that one day their past glory and grandeur might be restored. This was the reason why the Persian provinces, districts and cities would so often rise against the Muslim rule even though they were instantly put down by the Muslim forces. In 31 AH, Yezdgird reached the suburbs of Balkh at the head of a party from China and Turkistan and captured some cities for a short period. His misfortunes compelled him to flee and take refuge at the dwelling of a windmill owner. He was in deep sleep when the house owner, out of greed for his costly garments, killed him and threw his dead body into water after stripping him of his clothes, ornaments and weapons. This event took place in suburb of Marw on August 23, 651 CE. Yezdgird passed four years of his life in luxury, sixteen years in affliction and vagrancy and the last ten years out of sixteen he passed as a fugitive. The Persian troubles came to an end after Yezdgird was killed.

In this year, Muḥammad bin Abu Hudhaifah and Muḥammad bin Abu Bakr who were with Abdullah bin Sa'd bin Abu Sarh, the governor of Egypt, showed their dissatisfaction and displeasure over the way the ruler was managing affairs. Their resentment grew to an extent that they came out in the open against Uthmān bin Affān ؓ for his alleged policy of favoring an unworthy man like Abdullah bin Sa'd even though he earned the displeasure of the Prophet ﷺ during his lifetime.

## **Events of 32 AH**

In Dhul-Hijjah 31 AH, when Abdullah bin Āmir ؓ left to perform Hajj, an Persian general Qārin saw a golden opportunity for him to restore some Persian provinces. He proceeded at the head of a forty

thousand strong army. Abdullah bin Hâzim, a Muslim general, with only a few thousand soldiers under his command, showed such exemplary courage and valor that the Persians were defeated. With a small party of three to four thousand soldiers, Abdullah bin Hâzim advanced to face the forty thousand strong army of the Persians. Reaching near the enemy, the Muslim general ordered his soldiers to wrap their spears up with pieces of cloth and then soak them in oil or fat. When the army came closer to the battleground, he ordered his soldiers to set fire to the cloth wrapped spears while it was night and charge at the enemy with blazing fire. When the planning was translated into action, the Persian soldiers fled in shock and bewilderment at the sight of the flames. None of them had the courage and consciousness to face the Muslim soldiers. A large number of Persian soldiers were killed or captured.

### **Events of 33 AH**

Saeed bin Al-Âs ؓ took charge of Kufah after the dismissal of Walid bin Uqbah, as the governor of the province. Saeed began to do what he could to win the hearts of the people of Kufah. Mâlik bin Hârith Nakha'i (Mâlik bin Ashtar), Thâbit bin Qais, Aswad bin Yazid, Alqamah bin Qais, Jundub bin Zuhair, Jundub bin Ka'b Azdi, Urwah bin Al-Ju'd, Amr bin Al-Hamûq Khuza'i, Sa'sa'ah and Zaid-the sons of Suhân, and Kumail bin Ziyâd were regular visitors to the private assembly of Saeed bin Al-Âs ؓ. All of them indulged in fun and pleasantries. One day Saeed bin Al-Âs, the governor of Kufah uttered, "This territory is the garden of the Quraish." Hearing this, Mâlik bin Ashtar angrily remarked, "You call the territory the garden of your people, which we have conquered with our swords by the grace of Allâh the Almighty?" Others too joined the issue, which gave rise to a furore and created an unruly scene. When Abdur-Rahmân Asadi tried to silence them, they fell on him and gave him a severe beating with the result that he fell unconscious.

In the wake of this unusual event Saeed bin Al-Âs ؓ put an end to the night assembly and set guards around to ban the entry of the regular visitors. This action of the governor angered the people and they took to murmuring against the governor and the Caliph too. Very soon they were joined by men in the street. When opposition gained momentum,

Saeed bin Al-Âs ﷺ sent the whole account to the Caliph who wrote back that they should be sent to Syria to be looked after by Mu'awiyah ﷺ. Mu'awiyah ﷺ showed them utmost courtesy, dined with them and fixed a daily allowance for them. He did this because the Caliph had directed him to tactfully put them right. After a couple of days, Mu'awiyah ﷺ politely asked them to recognize the leadership of the Quraish and do nothing to disturb the unity of the Muslims. But one of the sons of Suhân gave a rude reply to what he said. Mu'awiyah ﷺ reported the matter to the Caliph and showed his inability to bring them back to reason and uprightness. Uthmân bin Affân ﷺ asked him to send them to Hims to the care of Abdur-Rahmân bin Khâlid. When they reached Hims Abdur-Rahmân bin Khâlid, the governor of Hims treated them rudely and didn't permit them to sit in his assembly. This rough and stern attitude and behavior of the governor affected them to the extent that they repented for their past actions. When the Caliph was informed of the development, he granted them permission to go back to Kufah if they so desired.

### **Abdullah bin Saba**

Abdullah bin Saba, known as Ibn Sauda' was a Jew from San'â. He accepted Islam during the caliphate of Uthmân bin Affân ﷺ with the intention of taking advantage of the progress and prosperity of the Muslims. He settled in Al-Madinah to go deep into the internal affairs and weaknesses of the Muslims to take advantage thereof. About the same time Hakim bin Jabalah, a man from Basrah made it a point to enlist with the Muslim troops and he plundered the *Dhimmi* whenever he had an opportunity. He would sometimes commit highway robbery with a band of criminals. When his evil activities went out of all proportions, the matter was reported to the Caliph.

He wrote to the governor of Basrah to put Hakim bin Jabalah in detention and his order was duly implemented. When Abdullah bin Saba heard about Hakim bin Jabalah, he set out from Al-Madinah, reached Basrah and stayed with Hakim bin Jabalah. There he established a very close and cordial relation with Hakim bin Jabalah and his friends. Afterwards, he set himself to creating doubts and mischievous thoughts in the minds of the people around him, after



very cleverly presenting himself as one who is a well-wisher of the Muslims and the family of the Prophet ﷺ. After gaining the confidence of many Muslims, he began to carry out his nefarious plan. He first raised the question that if Isa (Jesus) ﷺ could come back to this world, why not Muhammad ﷺ? In order to fortify his plea, he began to misinterpret the meaning of the Verse:

“Verily, He Who has given you the Qur’ān, will surely bring you back to place of return.” (28:85)

He proposed thereby that the last Prophet ﷺ must come back to this world. Following this, he began to bring the people round to another point that every Prophet had a caliph (successor) and executor and that of Muhammad ﷺ was Ali ﷺ, and he was the last executor as Muhammad ﷺ was the last Prophet. Encouraged by the favorable response from the gullible Muslims, he came out to openly propagate his evil intentions of doing away with the Caliph and replacing him by Ali ﷺ.

When his mischievous propaganda was brought to the notice of the governor, Abdullah bin Āmir ﷺ, he called Abdullah bin Saba and inquired of him as to who he was, where did he come from and what was he here for. Abdullah bin Saba explained that he was interested in Islam and he turned to Islam because of some weaknesses in Judaism and had a desire to settle here as his subject. Abdullah bin Āmir ﷺ told him that, on inquiry, he arrived at the conclusion that he was bent upon creating mischief and dissension in the ranks of the Muslims. Since the governor had brought his secret plan to light, Abdullah bin Saba left Basrah and came to another military base at Kufah after issuing secret instructions to his followers. In Kufah he found a section already working against the office of the caliphate and its governor. Thus Abdullah bin Saba found this land more fertile and the atmosphere more favorable and encouraging for his evil plans.

Abdullah bin Saba was antagonistic to Islam on one hand and was hostile to Uthmān bin Affān ﷺ on the other. He was, therefore, restless to take his revenge on the Caliph. In Kufah, he first established himself as a pious and God-fearing man and was very soon held in high esteem. When Abdullah’s mischievous activities

came to the notice of the governor, Saeed bin Al-Âs, he called him and took him to task. Abdullah bin Saba became suspect even in the eyes of the sober and noble persons. Finding the atmosphere unfavorable, he left Kufah and went to Syria.

Like Basrah he left behind a strong lobby in Kufah who were ready to carry on his dirty business. Mâlik Ashtar and his friends and relatives were the main figures to lend support to his plan. At Damascus, in Syria, his nefarious plans could not make any headway and he had to leave the city after being there only a short time. His next target was Egypt where he moved very cautiously in the light of his past experiences. He made love for the Prophet's family and support of Ali the main plank of his propaganda. In order to expedite his plan in an organized way he set up a secret society. He easily gained ground in Egypt because the Egyptians and the Arabs living there already had complaints against Abdullah bin Sa'd, the governor of Egypt. Abdullah bin Sa'd was also too preoccupied with the problems created by the African Berbers and the Caesar of Constantinople to pay attention to these internal affairs.

Abdullah bin Saba communicated with his friends in Basrah and Kufah by letter, his group instituted a letter writing campaign with the result that letters containing complaints were constantly being sent against the governors to the people of Al-Madinah from Egypt, Kufah and Basrah with charges of atrocities and malpractice brought against them. Similar letters were dispatched from Basrah and Kufah to Egypt and from Basrah, Egypt and Damascus to Kufah. Since no one was made the subject of atrocities, in each city they thought that this news was referring to other provinces which might be having victims of these malpractices. All these accusing letters were directed against Uthmân bin Affân, the Caliph who was charged with favoring despotic governors and refusing their dismissal. In view of the complaint letters coming in torrents, Uthmân bin Affân sent Ammâr bin Yâsir and Muhammad bin Maslamah to Egypt and Kufah respectively to make inquiries into the affairs and inform the office of the caliphate with the facts.

When Ammâr bin Yâsir reached Egypt, both the sections growing angry with the governor and the followers of Abdullah bin Saba

brought Ammâr to their own way of thinking. They held him back from going back to Al-Madinah saying that supporting the atrocious ways of Uthmân bin Affân was to be avoided. Muhammad bin Maslamah wrote to the Caliph from Kufah that both the common people and the noblemen were openly speaking against the Caliphate and showing signs of discontent. About the same time Ash'ath bin Qais, Saeed bin Qais, Sâ'ib bin Aqra', Mâlik bin Habib, Hakim bin Salâmat, Jarir bin Abdullah, and Salmân bin Rabi'ah who were wealthy, influential and courageous supporters of the Islamic caliphate left Kufah for other places. In view of the public protest and tumult prevailing over a vast area, Saeed bin Al-Âs appointed Qa'qâ' bin Amr his deputy and left for Al-Madinah to personally meet the Caliph and give an account of the new developments in Kufah. With his departure, the people of Kufah wrote to Mâlik Ashtar who was then staying in Hims that there was a complete vacuum in Kufah and they should come back without delay. In the absence of a strict governor, the antagonistic elements came out in open criticism and challenged the authority of the Caliph. Gradually they mustered enough courage to send a party of the disgruntled elements under the leadership of Yazid bin Qais to reach Al-Madinah to dislodge Uthmân bin Affân from power by force. However, Qa'qâ' bin Amr stood in the way and arrested Yazid.

Yazid implored Qa'qâ' to forgive him because he had nothing more than some complaints against Saeed bin Al-Âs and his mission was simply to seek the deposition of the governor. Qa'qâ' set Yazid free. However, shortly after that Mâlik Ashtar reached Kufah with his party from Hims. His arrival generated a new zeal into those causing disruptions and he declared his support to Yazid bin Qais and his decision to join the forces of Yazid. Qa'qâ' could not stop the joint forces of Yazid and Mâlik. They marched out of Kufah and arrived at Jara'ah near Qâdisiyah.

## **Events of 34 AH**

Uthmân bin Affân, the Caliph of Islam issued orders to all the governors to meet him in Al-Madinah after Hajj for important consultations. They assembled in Al-Madinah, Mu'awiyah from

Syria, Abdullah bin Sa'd bin Abu Sarh ؓ from Egypt, Saeed bin Al-Âs ؓ from Kufah, Abdullah bin Âmir ؓ from Basrah and others from the smaller provinces. In addition to these governors, the Caliph invited some men of sound judgement from Al-Madinah. The Caliph put before them the issue of the prevailing anger and dissatisfaction against him and sought their advice. Abdullah bin Âmir ؓ put forward his suggestion that the unruly elements should be engaged in activities of *Jihâd* to fill their idle hours and charged them with disruptive activities and uprisings. Saeed bin Al-Âs ؓ submitted the suggestion that the leaders of the troublemakers be dealt with a heavy hand for their punishments would scare away their followers. Even though the Caliph showed his agreement with this suggestion he thought it a difficult task. Mu'âwiyah ؓ came with the suggestion that governors of each province should uphold their responsibilities and clear the province off their existence. Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ suggested the point that they were all greedy and could, therefore, be subdued by the power of the purse.

When the real causes leading to the riots and disruptions were inquired into, it came to light that they were all whimsical and unfounded. Some of them raised the point that each one of the mischief-mongers and rioters should be put to death without showing any politeness. Uthmân bin Affân ؓ disagreed. He said that he could only punish the people according to the limits set by the Qur'ân. He was, therefore, not within his rights to kill anybody unless he became an apostate. In short, he could give capital punishment only for those acts for which penal ordinances of Islam had already been issued. As for himself, he could put up with all these tortures and hostilities with patience and fortitude. Thus the session was brought to an end without anything concrete decided.

However, the end product of the deliberations came in the shape of dispatching a detachment against the people engaged in disruptive activities and the governors were authorized to act accordingly. The governors left for their respective provinces. When Saeed bin Al-Âs ؓ reached Jara'ah in route to his province, he came across Yazid bin Qais lying there with a big armed force. He asked Saeed bin Al-Âs ؓ very rudely to go back for they would not allow him to step foot in

Kufah. Having heard this, the slave of Saeed bin Al-Âs ﷺ spoke firmly that it was impossible for Saeed ﷺ to return. Mâlik Ashtar full of wrath, pulled down the slave by his legs and killed him instantly. He then turned towards Saeed ﷺ and told him to go back, and ask Uthmân ﷺ to send Abu Musa Ash'ari ﷺ. Then Saeed bin Al-Âs ﷺ went back to Al-Madinah and gave the whole account to the Caliph. He called Abu Musa Ash'ari ﷺ, and appointed him governor of Kufah. He departed from Al-Madinah with a letter from the Caliph containing: "The man of your choice is being sent to you, and I will fulfill your desires to the extent that the *Shari'ah* permits me, and keep bearing with your excesses so as to bring about reform in you."

Abu Musa Ash'ari ﷺ in his address from the pulpit on *Jumu'ah* day, asked the people to do away with the rift among the Muslims and obey the Caliph. This speech brought peace to Kufah, and those unattached to the party of Ibn Saba felt satisfied. But the people attached to Abdullah bin Saba and those harboring hostile feelings against Uthmân bin Affân ﷺ set about complaining against the governors and officers appointed by the Caliph. They began to write letters to the influential people of Al-Madinah to create suspicion in their minds about Uthmân bin Affân ﷺ. In response to the complaints the people of Al-Madinah would grow angry with the governors and officials and press the Caliph for their dismissal. But, when they would come out faultless after inquiries, the Caliph refrained from taking any action against them. They grew suspicious of the fair dealings of the Caliph. Although men like Abu Usaid Sâ'idi, Ka'b bin Mâlik and Hassân bin Thâbit ﷺ rose to stop the disgruntled section from speaking against the Caliph but to no avail.

During this period the agents of Abdullah bin Saba flooded the provinces under Islamic rule with these poisonous letters with the sole mission of arousing people against the Caliph. The world of Islam was then represented by five seats of power. Al-Madinah was the center of power and grandeur from the beginning. Both Kufah and Basrah were the settlements of belligerent Arab tribes and also served as the magnificent cantonments of Islamic forces causing terror into the hearts of the Persians, Armenians, Georgians and the people of the vast land that belonged to the Persians in the past. Fustât or

Cairo was also a military cantonment wielding its influence up to Tripoli and Palestine besides Egypt. Damascus was the main center of power in Syria and the Muslim forces there were enough to cause Caesar to pass sleepless nights. In addition, whenever the Roman forces came face to face with the Muslim army they tasted defeat. Abdullah bin Saba was shrewd enough to gauge the significance of these five centers of power and influence. So he came to Al-Madinah first of all and then left for Basrah followed by Kufah and Damascus. He could not make much headway in Damascus owing to the presence of Mu'âwiyah.

However, he formed parties of the disgruntled elements in all the other places. He also supported the viewpoint of Abu Dhar Ghifârî accusing Mu'âwiyah of using the public treasury to serve his own interests declaring it to be the property of Allâh, although it was, in fact, the property of the Muslims and so it was to be distributed among them. He also made Uthmân bin Affân the target of his attack. During his campaign, he met Abud-Dardâ' and placed his evil thoughts before him. Having heard Abdullah bin Saba, he accused him of being a Jew working against the cause of Islam. He then met Ubâdah bin Sâmîr who heard him patiently and then brought him to Mu'âwiyah by force and said producing him before the governor of Damascus, "I presume that it is the same person who had created bad blood between you and Abu Dhar Ghifârî." Mu'âwiyah drove him out to Damascus. He then stopped in Egypt to propagate his evil ideas.

When complaint letters from almost every corner of the provinces and cities under the Muslim rule came pouring into Al-Madinah, some distinguished persons of Al-Madinah called on the Caliph and drew his attention to the prevailing anger and dissatisfaction against the governors appointed by him. Uthmân bin Affân then selected some reliable persons and sent them to each province to look into the situation and come back with a complete report. Thus Muhammad bin Maslamah was sent to Kufah and Usamah bin Zaid and Abdullah bin Umar were sent to Basrah and Syria respectively. In this way each big or small province and territory found one official to report the state affairs to the Caliph.

All the investigators returned with reports that none of the governors were found guilty of any evil act or excesses and all of them were carrying out their duties within the bounds of *Shari'ah*. Besides, no man of understanding and wisdom was found against any governor or the Caliph. The people of Al-Madinah received the reports with satisfaction. But very soon the situation took a disturbing turn. The *Hajj* season was at hand. Taking advantage of the opportunity, the Caliph proclaimed among the citizens of every city and town: "Reports are pouring into Al-Madinah highlighting the excesses of the governors of various provinces. So, I have sent orders to all the governors to be present at the *Hajj*. Anybody bearing complaints against anyone's governance should come and lodge it in my presence and get his rights either from me or from the governor after the verification of the facts."

### **Edict of Uthmān**

Every governor also received order from the Caliph to this effect. Thus following the orders, all the governors reached Makkah on the occasion of the *Hajj*. In accordance with the scheme of Abdullah bin Saba, his followers set out from every province and center but arrived in Al-Madinah instead of Makkah. On the occasion of *Hajj*, Uthmān bin Affān ؓ announced among the governors his readiness to listen to complaints but not a single person rose to lodge any complaint. Those present in the assembly of the Caliph were bent on finding ways and means of eradicating the troubles. But their discussions took a long time without any outcome. At this point Uthmān bin Affān ؓ said addressing them: "Trouble is bound to appear in the near future, but I don't like to be blamed for it, for whatever I have done, it was solely for the welfare of the people." This utterance of the Caliph silenced them all.

Uthmān ؓ came back to Al-Madinah after performing the *Hajj*. He then assembled those from outside and invited Ali, Talhah and Zubair ؓ also. Mu'āwiyah ؓ who had accompanied the Caliph from Makkah was also present. First of all Mu'āwiyah ؓ got up and addressed the assembly saying: "All of you, being the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, and men of sense and sound judgment, are the guardians of the *Ummah*. It is you who elected your fellow Uthmān



bin Affân as the Caliph without any favor. As now he has grown old, many things are heard from far and near. In case you have arrived at any decision regarding this, speak your mind and I am ready to reply. However, if you have developed greed for the caliphate, you will get nothing but taking a flight with your backs turned." Ali got enraged at the last sentence and rebuked him and he sat down silently.

Following this, Uthmân bin Affân rose to address and said: "Abu Bakr and Umar Faruq, after becoming Caliph, practiced caution concerning their relatives with an eye on accountability, although the Prophet took care of his relatives and extended help to them. My relatives are poor and so I do the needful for them. I am ready to do away with my practice if you prove it invalid and unlawful."

### Objections:

Uthmân bin Affân had spoken this much when a man got up and raised the objection: "You unlawfully gave away wealth and property to your relatives; for instance, you once gave the entire booty to Abdullah bin Sa'd." Uthmân replied: "I have given him one-fifth from the one-fifth of the booty. And we have such examples during the caliphates of Abu Bakr and Umar."

Another person said: "You have conferred power and rules on your relatives; for instance, you have appointed Mu'âwiyah bin Abu Sufyân governor of the entire Syria. You made Abdullah bin Âmir governor of Basrah by deposing Abu Musa Ash'ari; you installed Walid bin Uqbah and then Saeed bin Al-Âs governors of Kufah by removing Mughirah bin Shu'bah." Uthmân bin Affân replied, "Those governors are not my relatives and they have ability to manage the affairs well. However, if they don't deserve the post, I am always ready to change them for others. Thus I have already put Abu Musa Ash'ari as the governor of Kufah by removing Saeed bin Al-Âs."

Then the third person objected: "You have appointed undeserving and inexperienced persons as governors; for instance, Abdullah bin Âmir is a young man and, he should not have been given such a high post." Uthmân replied, "Abdullah bin Âmir is distinguished in prudence, ability and religiosity; being young is not a shortcoming."



Yet another person got up and said: "You love family members most, and you give them heavy gifts." Uthmân ﷺ replied, "Love of the family members is not a sin. And I give them gifts from my own possessions not from the public treasury. How can I give them anything from the public treasury when I myself don't take a single dirham from there? I am at liberty to give away anything to anybody from my personal property."

One more person rose to say: "You have used your position for your self and reserved grazing ground for your camels." Uthmân ﷺ replied, "When I took charge of the caliphate, nobody in Al-Madinah had camels more than me. But, today I possess only two camels and that only for the purpose of *Hajj*, and I don't allow them to go to any meadow. However, there is a reserved grazing ground for the state camels and I cannot be blamed for this because this has come to me from the past."

One of them questioned: "Why did you offer the complete prayer in Mina while it should have been a *Qasr* (shortened one)?" Uthmân bin Affân ﷺ replied: "Since my family members were then residing in Makkah, it was valid for me not to perform a *Qasr* (shortened) prayer."

In short, objections of this nature were raised and Uthmân bin Affân ﷺ answered them fully and thoroughly. At the end of the assembly, the people left silently. Amr bin Al-Âs ﷺ then said to Uthmân bin Affân ﷺ, "You are more polite to them than what is needed. This was not the way of Umar, governors at a distance of hundreds of miles dreaded him more than the slaves at his service. One should be treated politely so far as there is no danger of any disturbance. Why don't you slay those about whom you know very well that they are creating a rift and confusion among the Muslims?" Hearing this Uthmân bin Affân ﷺ kept silent.

## **Events of 35 AH**

The governors of various provinces began to leave Al-Madinah. When Mu'āwiyah ﷺ, the governor of Syria decided to depart, he came to Uthmân bin Affân ﷺ and said, "I anticipate an attack on you and you

may not be able to resist it. It's better for you to accompany me to Syria, for the Syrians are loyal and lend their full support to me." Uthmân bin Affân ؓ replied, "On no account shall I abandon the proximity and neighborhood of the Prophet ﷺ." Having heard this Mu'âwiyah ؓ said, "Let me send you an army from Syria to guard you against any eventuality." Uthmân ؓ said, "I am not in favor of putting my neighbors into trouble." Hearing this Mu'âwiyah ؓ said, "You are bound to be deceived." In reply to this Uthmân bin Affân ؓ said, "Allâh is enough for me and what an Excellent Supporter He is." After which he remained silent.

Mu'âwiyah ؓ then left the place and came to Ali, Talhah and Zubair ؓ and after requesting them to provide protection to Uthmân bin Affân ؓ, he set off for Syria.

### **Conspiracy of Abdullah bin Saba**

Abdullah bin Saba had already finalized his nefarious plan during his stay in Egypt. He had won Companions like Ammâr bin Yâsir ؓ and Warqa bin Râfi' ؓ to his side. But, none besides his small group was aware of his game. His love for Ali ؓ and the family of the Prophet ﷺ was nothing more than a ploy for inciting people against the caliphate. A considerable number of Muslim soldiers had joined his party. Gradually Abdullah bin Saba won the hearts of enough people to challenge the authority of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ and bring about his deposition or do away with him. But the issue of his successor was still the bone of contention. Gradually his party was divided in three groups each supporting its own candidate from among Ali, Talhah and Zubair ؓ. Since Abdullah bin Saba had no interest in the unity and strength of Islam, he held back his support from Ali ؓ and left the matter to the contenders. His main issue was the liquidation of Uthmân's caliphate.

### **Departure of the Caravan of Mischief-Mongers**

At first a group of one thousand people were sent in advance pretending to be a Hajj mission. The party consisted of Abdur-Rahmân bin Udais, Kinânah bin Bishr Laithi, and Sudân bin Humrân

and was headed by Ghâfiqi bin Harb Akki. It was decided that the entire party should not proceed at one time from Egypt. The party was thus divided into four groups to leave Egypt separately and then to meet after several stages. Another party of one thousand left Kufah in four groups including Zaid bin Suhân Al-Abdi, Ziyâd bin Nadr Al-Hârithi, Abdullah bin Al-Asam and Amr bin Al-Asam led by Mâlik Ashtar; and yet another of the same number marched from Basrah including Hukaim bin Jabalah, Dharih bin Abbâd Al-Abdiyân, Bishr bin Shuraih Qaisi, and Ibn Muharrish Al-Hanafi with Hurqus bin Zuhair Sa'di at its head. All these parties left their cities in the month of Shawwâl 35 AH, under the pretext of going to *Hajj*. However, the mission before one and all was to get rid of the Caliph either by deposing or by killing him. At the appointed time, the parties coming from different directions joined one another and proceeded to Al-Madinah. Three stages from Al-Madinah, the party divided itself into three separate groups each supporting its own candidate for the caliphate. Thus the supporters of Talhah ؓ halted at Dhu Khushub, those of Zubair bin Al-Awwâm ؓ at A'was and the followers of Ali ؓ at Dhul-Marwah. The majority of Talhah's supporters belonged to Basrah and the major part of Zubair bin Al-Awwâm's and Ali's supporters were from Kufah and Egypt respectively.

Ziyâd bin Nadr and Abdullah bin Al-Asam asked the rioters to hold at their respective spots until they went into Al-Madinah to look into the prevailing situation there. In case the people of Al-Madinah were prepared to face them, their attempt would prove abortive. The rioters kept quiet and those two persons called on Ali, Talhah, Zubair ؓ and the Mothers of the believers and acquainted them with the purpose of their arrival. All of them deplored their intentions and ordered them to go back.

It is worth mentioning here that the followers of Abdullah bin Saba in Al-Madinah had written forged letters in the names of Ali, Talhah, Zubair, and the Mothers of the believers, to their followers in Kufah, Basrah and Egypt who were against Abdullah bin Saba and his group. The letters emphasized that Uthmân bin Affân ؓ was no longer able to shoulder the heavy burden of the caliphate. Therefore the matter should be brought to its end in the month of Dhul-Hijjah. Encouraged

by these forged letters, the rioters found it easy to indulge in acts of plunder, massacre and doing away with the present caliphate. They could not have, otherwise, mustered courage to plan an invasion as regards Al-Madinah, the city of the Prophet ﷺ, where even a strong army of the disbelievers failed to make inroads during the battle of the Trench. All the distinguished persons rejected their nefarious plan outright but they found no preparations of any kind whatsoever in Al-Madinah. They went back to the rioters and assembled their chiefs and representatives for an emergency consultation. Allaying fears of any defensive preparations in Al-Madinah from their minds, they placed before them a suggestion that the parties belonging to Egypt, Basrah and Kufah should contact Ali, Talhah and Zubair ؓ respectively. They should make an attempt during separate meetings to bring them round to their viewpoint saying that at no cost did they like the caliphate of Uthmān bin Affān ؓ.

Accordingly, they then offered their allegiance to them. But each of them rejected their offer very rudely. Thereupon the party from Egypt said to Ali ؓ, "Since Abdullah bin Sa'd, the governor of our province is cruel, we cannot leave Al-Madinah without getting him deposed." With an eye on their obstinacy and nerve, Ali ؓ and some other Companions called on the Caliph and advised him to fulfill their demand to stop the trouble and depose Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ as the governor of Egypt. "Who will then be appointed the governor of Egypt?" Uthmān bin Affān ؓ asked.

### **Ali ؓ intercedes**

Ali ؓ and other Companions took the name of Muhammad bin Abu Bakr who happened to be the supporter of Ali ؓ and was entrapped by Abdullah bin Saba. Therefore, the Caliph issued an edict appointing Muhammad bin Abu Bakr, governor of Egypt. After this Ali ؓ sent the rioters out. But the third or fourth day, all the parties joined together and came into Al-Madinah crying *Takbir* with the utmost fervor and cordoned off the house of the Caliph. Ali ؓ saw them and said, "You had already left this place, what made you come back?" They said, "The Caliph has sent a letter to Abdullah bin Sa'd through his slave to kill us as soon as we reach there. We have seized

the letter and have come here with it and along with the parties from Egypt and Kufah who want to share our problem." Ali ؓ said, "By Allâh this is an act of conspiracy and you are ill-intentioned." They replied, "Whatever be the case, we have decided to kill the Caliph, and we seek your assistance in the task." Ali ؓ angrily said, "How can I help you?" Hearing this they said, "Why had you then written about this?" Ali ؓ firmly replied, "I have never written you anything." Hearing this they looked towards each other with amazement. Ali ؓ then left Al-Madinah to stay in Ahjâr-uz-Zait and the rioters surrounded the house of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ. They followed the Caliph in prayers but they now gave it up and began also to hold others back from standing in prayer behind him.

Witnessing the lurking danger around him, the Caliph wrote letters to various provinces and sought their help, and in some cases the news reached those places on its own. However, virtuous men and the Companions persuaded the people in Egypt, Syria, Kufah and Basrah to rush to the help of the Caliph. Mu'âwiyah ؓ and Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ sent Habib bin Maslamah Fihri and Mu'âwiyah bin Hudaij respectively while Qa'qa' bin Amr ؓ set out at the head of a party from Kufah. A party from Basrah also proceeded to Al-Madinah. But none of them were able to reach Al-Madinah before the martyrdom of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ. The mosque was under siege and after that, the rioters prevented him from coming out of his home and cut off the supply of water too. Although Uthmân bin Affân ؓ persistently tried to convince the rioters that the letter was not written by him and asked them to produce any witness but his plea was ignored by them.

### **Abu Ayub Ansâri ؓ leads the Prayer**

In the wake of his inability to come to the mosque, the Caliph appointed Abu Ayub Ansâri ؓ to do the job. However, after a few days, Ghâfiqi bin Harb Akki, the chief of the rioters, started leading the prayers. Like Muhammad bin Abu Bakr, the governor of Egypt, Muhammad bin Hudaijah was also working against the Caliph. When Abdur-Rahmân bin Udaib marched towards Al-Madinah from Egypt, Muhammad bin Abu Bakr had also accompanied them to Al-Madinah, but Muhammad bin Hudaijah had stayed back in Egypt.

On hearing the news of Uthmān bin Affān's siege, Abdullah bin Sa'd left for Al-Madinah with a party. But as soon as he reached Ramlah, he came to know that Egypt was captured by Muhammad bin Hudaifah. He hurried back but heard of Uthmān bin Affān's martyrdom while in Palestine. The siege continued for forty days.

When the rioters made a scene, Ali sent both his sons Hasan and Husain to stand at the door of Uthmān bin Affān with locked arms and stop the entry of the rioters into his house. Talhah and Zubair also sent their sons and they stopped their movements. The rioters knew well that any harm done to them meant bearing the brunt of Banu Hāshim's fury as a whole. However, the rioters were also in hurry because of the arrival of official forces from the provinces could foil their plan. Thus they broke into an adjoining house and made entry into the Caliph's house by scaling its walls.

### **Martyrdom of Uthmān bin Affān**

When the rioters showed the letter written on his behalf, Uthmān bin Affān declared it a forgery. Abdur-Rahmān bin Udais, the ringleader of the rioters rejected it saying, "If you are a liar, you are not fit to remain as a Caliph. In case you are true in your claim then such a weak Caliph should not be left to rule if he is not able to keep control over his administration and let anybody write anything on his behalf." At last, Abdur-Rahmān bin Udais asked Uthmān bin Affān to quit the caliphate. But he said, "I can't put off the garment that Allāh has caused me to put on." That is, he refused to give up the post of the Caliph. When the intensity of the siege increased and even the supply of water was stopped, Uthmān bin Affān went to the roof of his house and reminded them of their sacrifices for Islam and the position he held after embracing Islam. A section of the rioters seemed to forgive him but Mālik bin Ashtar intervened to keep them firm in their plan. Moreover, when the rioters were convinced of the arrival of rescue forces from the provinces, they were determined to do away with the Caliph.

During these days, Aishah decided to go on Hajj. She sent for Muhammad bin Abu Bakr to accompany her on the journey to Makkah. But he refused to do so because he was involved with the

rioters. Hanzlah ﷺ, the scribe of the Revelations, said to him, "You refuse to accompany the Mother of the believers and instead follow the fools of Arabia." Muhammad bin Abu Bakr gave no reply. Talhah and Zubair ﷺ had closed their doors and would neither go anywhere nor meet anybody. Ibn Abbās ﷺ faced the rioters at the door of Uthmān bin Affān ﷺ and stopped them from drawing near. But the Caliph insisted that he lead the *Hajj* caravan, although he said that waging *Jihād* against the rioters was to him better than performing the *Hajj*. Hasan bin Ali, Abdullah bin Zubair, Muhammad bin Talhah, Saeed bin Al-Ās ﷺ stopped the rioters from opening the door and fought to push them back.

But Uthmān bin Affān ﷺ prevented them from doing so on oath and called them in. The rioters set fire to the doors. They fought and drove them out once again. Uthmān bin Affān ﷺ was then reciting Qur'ān. When he reached the Verse:

"Those (i.e., believers) unto whom the people (hypocrites) said: 'Verily, the people (pagans) have gathered against you (a great army), therefore, fear them.' But it (only) increased them in Faith, and they said: 'Allāh (Alone) is Sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs (for us)'." (3:173)

He said addressing those present, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has taken a pledge from me and I firmly keep it, so hold yourselves back from fighting the rioters." He also asked Hasan bin Ali ﷺ to go back to his father but he declined the advice and kept at the door.

Mughirah bin Al-Akhnas ﷺ could not bear the situation and he attacked the rioters along with some of his companions and was martyred. In the same way, Abu Hurairah ﷺ launched an assault on the rioters reciting the Verse:

"And O my people! How is it that I call you to salvation while you call me to the Fire!" (40:41)

When Uthmān ﷺ came to know of it, he insistently called him back. Meanwhile, Abdullah bin Salām ﷺ came and he did all he could to pacify the rioters but in vain. Among those present with Uthmān bin Affān ﷺ, some were upstairs watching the movements of the rioters

while others were at the gate stopping their entry. Uthmān bin Affān ؓ and his wife Nā'ilah, the daughter of Al-Furāfisah were inside.

The rioters, scaled the walls, entered the house of Uthmān bin Affān ؓ, and made an assault on him. First of all Muhammad bin Abu Bakr came near Uthmān bin Affān ؓ and said catching hold of his beard, "O long-bearded one, may Allāh put you to disgrace." Uthmān ؓ replied, "I am not a long-bearded man, but Uthmān, the Chief of the believers." Thereupon Muhammad bin Abu Bakr angrily said, "You covet the caliphate even in your old age." Uthmān ؓ said, "Had your father been alive, he would have valued my old age." At this Muhammad bin Abu Bakr got ashamed and left. Followed by his retreat a group of criminals came down scaling the wall. The group included Abdur-Rahmān bin Udais, Amr bin Hamiq, Umair bin Jannābi, Sudān bin Humrān, Ghāfiqi and Kinānah bin Bishr who first struck Uthmān ؓ with a sword. His wife Nā'ilah came forward and stretched her hand to stop the stroke with the result that her fingers were cut off and thrown away. But he struck him a second time, which led to his martyrdom. It so happened when Uthmān ؓ was reciting the Qur'ān, his blood dropped on the Verse:

"So, Allāh will suffice you against them. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower." (2:137)

Amr bin Hamiq gave him nine wounds with his spear. Umair bin Jannābi moved forward and kicked him violently more than once so that his ribs were broken. At every kick he would say: "It was you who had imprisoned my father and the poor man died in captivity." Nā'ilah called out to those upstairs who were unaware of what was happening in the house. The rioters had completed their evil act before those upstairs arrived. The criminals fled and the slaves of Uthmān ؓ killed a few of them.

Nobody was needed now to guard the door. The rioters then made a forced entry into the house and plundered all the articles that they found. The news of this tragedy spread like lightning. This soul-shattering incident came to pass on Friday, Dhul-Hijjah 18, 35 A.H. The dead body of Uthmān ؓ lay unshrouded and unburied for three days. At last Hakim bin Hizām and Jubair bin Mut'im ؓ went to Ali



✽, he gave permission for him to be buried. The body was buried between *Maghrib* and *Isha'* prayers. Zubair, Hasan, Abu Jahm bin Hudaifah, and Marwân accompanied the bier. The rioters tried to obstruct the burial service but held back on the intervention of Ali ✽. Jubair bin Mut'im ✽ led the funeral prayers. He was then buried without bath and coffin.

At the time of the martyrdom of Uthmân bin Affân ✽ the following governors were in power:

Abdullah bin Al-Hadrami in Makkah, Qâsim bin Rabi'ah in Tâ'if, Ya'la bin Munyah in San'â', Abdullah bin Rabi'ah in Jund, Abdullah bin Âmir in Basrah, Mu'âwiyah bin Abu Sufyân in Syria, Abdur-Rahmân bin Abu Khâlid in Hims, Habib bin Maslamah in Qinnasrin, Abul-A'war Sulami in Jordan, Abdullah bin Qais Fazâri in Bahrain, Alqamah bin Hakim Kindi in Palestine from Mu'âwiyah, Abu Musa Ash'ari in Kufah, Jarir bin Abdullah in Qarqisiah, Ash'ath bin Qais in Azerbaijân, Sâ'ib bin Aqra' in Isfahan. Qa'qâ' bin Amr was then the commander-in-chief and Jâbir Muzani and Sammâk Ansâri were in charge of tributes, while Uqbah bin Amr was in charge of public treasury in Al-Madinah and Zaid bin Thâbit was the chief justice.

Uthmân bin Affân ✽ died at the age of 82 after passing 12 years as a caliph. He was buried in Jannat-ul-Baqi' leaving behind eleven sons and six daughters.

### A Summary of Uthmân's Caliphate

Events of Uthmân bin Affân's tenure bring to view new phenomena we did not witness during the caliphates of Abu Bakr Siddiq and Umar Fâruq ✽. Many things had changed beyond recognition. Up to the caliphate of Umar Fâruq ✽, wealth and worldly possessions had no value. The Caliph was almost the poorest of all, no value was attached to worldly comforts neither by the ruler nor the ruled. The greatest desire of one and all was to lay down one's life in the way and for the Pleasure of Allâh the Almighty and uphold His Message. Such a desire and feeling lessened to a great extent. Uthmân bin Affân ✽ was a wealthy person and his way of life even after becoming Caliph showed signs thereof.

Countries and territories were conquered during the caliphate of Umar Fâruq ؓ bringing immense riches to the Muslims but they didn't get any worldly comforts from it. But the same wealth during the tenure of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ led them to develop love for a life of luxury. They were overpowered by the desire to purchase property and accumulate wealth. As a result of this, the characteristic spirit of vitality and military abilities decreased, which were once distinct signs of the Muslims and the Arabs. The thatched roofs began to change into palaces and palatial buildings. Military prowess gave way to rich habits. And this was the greatest misfortune that came to the Muslims.

Through the era of Abu Bakr Siddiq and Umar Fâruq ؓ the dominant force among the Muslims who had been in the company of the Prophet ﷺ, was that they considered Islam a thing of their own and they had entrusted their lives to Islam. Islam had gained ground in their hearts so deeply that all tribal signs were wiped out. Nothing was dearer to them than Islam. The flood of conquests that engulfed vast territories, brought people to the fold of Islam in large numbers. Many witnessed the progress and prosperity of the Muslims and joined the cause with their own well-being in view. Islam had not come into their hearts to produce in them the sense of love and sacrifice for the new faith.

Most of victories during the tenure of Umar ؓ were the result of the battles won by the fighters from Banu Wâ'il, Banu Abdul-Qais, Banu Rabi'ah, Banu Azd, Banu Kindah, Banu Tamim, and Banu Quzâ'ah. It was they who had trampled under their feet Persian provinces, Syrian territories and the fertile lands of Egypt and Palestine. They alone had shattered the Persian and Roman Empires into pieces. But none of these tribes had ever drunk directly from the fountain of the Prophet ﷺ. As a result, they were not on a par with the men of the Quraish and Hijâz in Faith and undying love for Islam. But Umar Fâruq ؓ had such vision that could see through all the problems and impediments in their depths and complexities and found solutions so skillfully that everyone was amazed. He had set up such a system and established such a leading role for the *Muhâjirin* and the *Ansâr* that up to his caliphate it remained impossible for elements outside this circle

to even think of approaching this noble group. The position of the *Muhâjirin* and the *Ansâr* was, during his caliphate, like those of conquerors, yet men of wisdom.

Umar Fâruq ؓ had so prudently and cautiously preserved the characteristic military prowess and vitality of the Arab fighters that they were kept confined to settlements away from the lust and attraction of the Syrian cities. He, on the other hand, kept distinguished Companions and those in commanding positions away from the company of the masses and ordinary classes.

He did this so wisely and imperceptibly that nobody was aware of it and he managed their affairs in a manner that their awe and dread could not be eroded from the minds of their subordinates. And, above all, a party of the elite and men wielding power, influence and prudence always remained clustered around him in Al-Madinah.

But, during the caliphate of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ such practices gradually disappeared. Arab tribes began to consider themselves equal to the *Muhâjirin* and the *Ansâr* and even superior to them. The Companions who commanded dignity were scattered in far off places, with the result that the commanding force of Al-Madinah was weakened beyond description, and confusion and disorder became common. Thus the capital of Islam could not longer remain the center of power. In such a state of crisis, old tribal rivalries and feuds strongly emerged and Islamic brotherhood could not contain them. The new entrants outnumbered the *Muhâjirin* and the *Ansâr*, and took away from them the reins of power and influence.

Uthmân bin Affân ؓ was polite to the extreme. But softness alone is not helpful in running an administration; it needs the manifestation of power and strong actions at times. During the caliphate of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ, the Muslims indulged in a life of luxuries and comforts on one hand and the dread and awe of the Caliph had eroded on the other. In such an untenable situation, ambitions and power hungry sections got ample opportunity to give vent to their desire of holding power. Thus such men of ambition among the Quraish and Hijâz could easily win the help and support of the new-Muslim tribes and fighters.

The Quraish tribe before Islam was understood to be divided into two parts, Banu Umayyah and Banu Hâshim. Even though these two tribes alone did not make up the entire Quraish and other tribes were also important. But since these two tribes were opposed to one another, other tribes were attached to either of the two. The power and influence of Banu Umayyah had surpassed Banu Hâshim at the time of advent of Islam. As a natural corollary, Banu Umayyah was vehemently opposed to the Prophethood for Muhammad ﷺ belonged to Banu Hâshim. Abu Sufyân hailed from Banu Umayyah and was so dedicated to the defeat of Islam that he led the disbelievers against Islam in the battles of Uhud and the Confederates. But, at last Banu Umayyah including Abu Sufyân confessed Islam. Thus the differences and rivalries between Banu Hâshim and Banu Umayyah came to an end. Islam obliterated all signs and traces of racial and tribal distinctions.

While Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ and Umar Fâruq ؓ held the rein of caliphate, the state of affairs went undisturbed. But during the caliphate of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ, old rivalries staged a comeback. And since Uthmân bin Affân ؓ was from Banu Umayyah, and he held his relatives very dear, they took undue advantage of that.

Besides these new developments, which took place due to the weak caliphate, new entrants to the fold of Islam, the erosion of power and influence of the *Muhâjirin*, *Ansâr* and the Quraish, mass indulgence in the life of luxuries were some of the factors that proved advantageous to Banu Umayyah. Marwân bin Al-Hakam as the main scribe of the Caliph, benefited their cause immensely. When the governorship of a number of provinces came to their possession, and they were able to wield power and influence throughout, they set off to restore their position prior to Islam.

Gradually Banu Hâshim and others also grew conscious of the prevailing situation. But to say that Uthmân bin Affân ؓ was a party to Banu Umayyah's policies and programs is far from reality and is a baseless charge.

Nevertheless, the polite behavior and softness towards relatives played a significant role in encouraging Banu Umayyah to cross all limits. And

they did what could not be conceived of during the tenures of the former Caliphs. But, one is however, compelled to say that, although good treatment to relatives is quite reasonable, a Caliph must walk very cautiously upon this track. But he, perhaps, failed to see these reasons. Marwân bin Al-Hakam, his cousin did all what he could to deteriorate the situation but Uthmân bin Affân ❀ did nothing to get rid of him, particularly when Marwân did not deserve such an important post by virtue of his abilities and character.

With Uthmân bin Affân ❀ at the helm, Persian provinces began to rise in revolt. But Islamic forces also rose to punish the insurgents. The control and conquest of Seistân and Kirmân are examples of this. Besides, Harât, Kâbul, Balkh and some other territories were conquered in the wake of Turkish and Chinese invasions. Muslim armies won Cyprus and Rhodes as a result of the Roman assaults on Egypt and Alexandria. Because of the war preparations of the Romans of Africa and Asia Minor, Muslim territories extended to Tripoli and Armenia.

In short, many important victories were won during the caliphate of Uthmân bin Affân ❀ also. Following the instructions of Uthmân bin Affân ❀, the governors constructed roads, set up educational institutions and promoted trading and agricultural development. But one cannot afford to overlook the undeniable fact that all such progress and developmental works took place during the first half of his caliphate, while disturbances and disruptions marked the next half. The Muslims who were devoted to the task of preaching Islam and uprooting idolatry, now worked for vested interests and engaged in rivalries and feuds of the worst nature. Banu Umayyah had, by now, multiplied their strength and influence and succeeded in expanding their areas of domination far and wide.

It was, nevertheless, necessary for other Muslim tribes to vie with Banu Umayyah in their activities injurious to Islamic unity and solidarity. The sober and saner section among the *Muhâjirin* and *Ansâr* could have come to the rescue but, unfortunately it did not happen. Meanwhile, the wretched Jew, Abdullah bin Saba dominated the disruptive scene and caused such damage to the Muslims that they have never completely recovered.

Even during the Prophetic era, the Muslim *Ummah* had suffered at the hands of the hypocrites led by Abdullah bin Ubai, while under the leadership of Abdullah bin Saba, they inflicted an irreparable loss. Abdullah bin Ubai could not make any headway because of the presence of the Prophet ﷺ, but Abdullah bin Saba had no one to combat his nefarious activities effectively.

To oppose Banu Umayyah, he used Ali ؑ and easily antagonized almost all tribes of Arabia against them. These were all those who took pride in their deeds of valor and looked down upon the Quraish and the men of the Hijâz. However, they were not among the first entrants to Islam and were known as new-Muslims. Abdullah bin Saba did not experience much difficulty in rousing the people against Uthmân bin Affân ؓ. He roamed through Basrah, Kufah and Damascus and visited military cantonments. He found favorable situations everywhere except in Damascus. He used the dispute between Abu Dhar Ghifari and Mu'awiyah ؓ for his purpose. At the end of his travels he reached Egypt and began to give shape to his plans from there. Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ, the governor of Egypt was ahead of all in self-will and freedom of action but deficient in farsightedness and prudence, and careless about internal peace and the welfare of the people. Abdullah bin Saba found here two or three of the Companions who supported his cause.

He noticed that although Talhah ؓ had more influence in Basrah and Zubair ؓ in Kufah, the whole world of Islam was still under the influence of Ali ؑ. Thus he sat down in Egypt to organize and consolidate his camp so cleverly that the people of Kufah and Basrah could be easily aroused against Banu Umayyah and Uthmân bin Affân ؓ. In Egypt, he gave publicity to his love for Ali ؑ, his victimization, his right of the caliphate and his being the sole executor after the Prophet ﷺ. He did everything so cautiously and cleverly that in a very short time, a party of Ali's supporters was formed. Very soon the entire world of Islam was carried away by disruptions. Thus the Companions lost the chance to bring Banu Umayyah back to the right path.

The worst kind of mischief caused by Abdullah bin Saba was a large number of letters to the people of Kufah, Basrah and Egypt on behalf of Ali ؑ from Al-Madinah. These letters played a vital role in

winning the easily excited people to his side. His plan had two purposes. Uthmân ؓ was to be assassinated on one hand and the finger of suspicion was to be pointed towards Ali ؓ, and alas, this baseless doubt lingers on to this day. Abdullah bin Saba was friend neither of Uthmân ؓ nor Ali ؓ; he was an enemy of both and his sole aim was to destroy Islam. He, thus, got Uthmân ؓ on one hand and caused immense harm to the reputation of Ali ؓ on the other.

### **Features and Characteristics of Uthmân ؓ**

Uthmân bin Affân ؓ was affable and tolerant. Alcoholic drink was a forbidden thing for him even during the days of Ignorance, and from those days he never was attracted towards adultery and gambling. His generosity benefited one and all even before he accepted Islam. He would go to perform *Hajj* every year and had his tents pitched in Mina, he never would come back without feeding the pilgrims and these feasts were arranged out of his own pocket. The Prophet ﷺ and his family would so often pass through the state of starvation and Uthmân bin Affân ؓ provided food for them. The Prophet ﷺ had often prayed for him: "O Allāh, I am pleased with Uthmân; You also be pleased with him. O Allāh, I am pleased with Uthmân; You also be pleased with him."

Famine once broke out during the caliphate of Abu Bakr Siddiq ؓ. Scarcity of food put the people in great hardship. During one of those days, news came that one thousand camels of Uthmân ؓ had arrived in Al-Madinah laden with food grains. The starving population of the city rushed to Uthmân bin Affân ؓ and requested him to sell them food grains even at exorbitant prices. At this Uthmân bin Affân ؓ said, "Bear witness that I have given away all the food grains to the poor and needy of Al-Madinah."

Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ relates, "The same night I saw in dream that the Prophet ﷺ was hurrying mounted on a horse in garments of light. I rushed forward and submitted, 'I was eager to have a glimpse of you.' He said, 'I am now in a hurry, Uthmân has given in charity one thousand camels laden with food grains and after he granted it, Allāh the Almighty has given a bride in marriage to Uthmân. I am going to join the marriage party.'"

From the day he converted to Islam to his last day, he would set one slave free every Friday. Even when besieged by the rioters and in a state when the water supply was cut off, he continued this act. He used to live on simple food and wore simple clothes. However, he always served sumptuous food to his guests. Even during his caliphate, he never demanded to be treated preferentially. He would sit beside others and show respect to one and all. He once asked his slave to take revenge on him for he had committed excesses. The slave caught his ear in response to his order. "Catch it rather strongly for the retaliation in this world is much lighter than that of the Hereafter." His efforts in compiling the Qur'an and unifying the method of recitation, and his expansion of the Prophet's Mosque have already been mentioned. He was in the habit of being at his work on time.

### **Some Significant Indications**

At the time when the rioters had taken Al-Madinah by storm Âishah ؓ left Al-Madinah to perform *Hajj*. When she was on her way back to Al-Madinah, she heard of Uthmân's martyrdom and she returned to Makkah without delay.

When the rioters mobbed Al-Madinah, Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ, who was then in Al-Madinah, moved out along with his sons, Abdullah and Muhammad, they settled in Palestine, and only there did he receive the tragic news of Uthmân's martyrdom.

When Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ, the governor of Egypt, heard rioters besieging Uthmân bin Affân ؓ, he proceeded to Al-Madinah but returned on hearing that the Caliph had already been murdered. On his return he got the news that Muhammad bin Abu Hudaifah had taken over in Egypt, thus he was forced to stay in Palestine and later he settled in Damascus.

At the time of Uthmân's martyrdom, Ali, Talhah, Zubair, Abdullah bin Umar and Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ؓ were in Al-Madinah, they found their honor at stake because among the rioters were insincere supporters making false claims about them. They all shut themselves behind closed doors to avoid any connection with the rioters.



## **Rioter's Rule in Al-Madinah**

From the day the rioters put a ban on the exit of Uthmān bin Affān from his house and his attendance at the mosque, Al-Madinah had virtually come under their rule. After Uthmān's martyrdom, Ghāfiqī bin Harb Akkī, the chief of the rioters, held the powers of the caliphate for about a week and set about issuing all orders including the appointment of someone to lead the prayers.

But the wiser section of them wanted to put a respectable man as Caliph. They argued that in the absence of a reputable man as Caliph, their successful efforts would be taken as a mere uprising and rioting. Thus they decided not to leave Al-Madinah without electing a Caliph.

Abdullah bin Saba rushed to Al-Madinah incognito and joined his party. He also favored the election of a Caliph. Thus they met Ali, Talhah and Zubair separately and requested each of them to accept the responsibility of the caliphate. But each of them refused the offer point-blank and they had to return empty-handed and frustrated.

At last, Abdullah bin Saba instilled in their mind a workable plan according to which it was drummed up throughout Al-Madinah: "It is the people of Al-Madinah who have always played the pivotal role of electing a Caliph, and the Muslim *Ummah* accepted it wholeheartedly. Now we give them just two days to elect a Caliph, if they fail to elect a Caliph, we will kill Ali, Talhah and Zubair."

This announcement sent terror into the hearts of the people of Al-Madinah who came out of their houses and hurried to Ali and the other two. While Talhah and Zubair flatly refused to shoulder the burden of the caliphate, Ali agreed to it after initially refusing. Following his consent, the people came in large numbers to take *Bai'ah* (oath of allegiance) at his hand.

## **Ali bin Abu Tâlib** ﷺ

### **Name and Pedigree:**

His family lineage is Ali bin Abu Tâlib bin Abdul-Muttalib bin Hâshim bin Abd Manâf bin Qusai bin Kilâb bin Murrah bin Ka'b bin Luai bin Ghâlib.

The Prophet ﷺ addressed him with the filial appellation of Abul-Hasan and Abu Turâb. His mother was Fâtimah bint Asad bin Hâshim. She was the first Hashmite to be married in a Hashmite family, accepted Islam and migrated from Makkah. Ali ﷺ was the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet ﷺ. He was of medium height inclined to short stature, hair receding from his head but spreading all over the body, thick-bearded and wheat-complexioned.

### **Distinctive Features:**

Ali ﷺ was among those who embraced Islam first of all. He was one of those who collected the Qur'ân and placed it before the Prophet ﷺ. He was the first caliph from Banu Hâshim. From childhood he never worshipped idols. While migrating from Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ left him behind to hand over the trusts to their owners. After carrying out this order of the Prophet ﷺ, he also migrated to Al-Madinah.

Barring the battle of Tabuk, he accompanied the Prophet ﷺ to all the battles, for the Prophet ﷺ had made him the acting administrator of Al-Madinah during the battle of Tabuk. In the battle of Uhud, Ali ﷺ sustained sixteen wounds on his body. On the occasion of the battle of Khaibar, the Prophet ﷺ had given the standard of Islam to him with the prophecy that the standard-bearer would conquer Khaibar.

He liked his appellation 'Abu Turab' very much and he would express his happiness whenever addressed by this. The reason he was given this name was that he was laying down in the mosque and the Prophet ﷺ came to the mosque and woke Ali ﷺ who was covered with dust and the Prophet ﷺ wiped the dust from his body saying, "Get up, O Abu Turâb." (*Turâb* literally means dirt or dust.)

## Excellences:

Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ؓ relates that on the occasion of the battle of Tabuk, the Prophet ﷺ asked Ali ؓ to stay in Al-Madinah. He said, "You are leaving me behind among the women and children." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Are you not happy that I am leaving you behind as Musa (Moses) ؑ had left Hârun (Aaron) ؑ except that there will be no Prophet after me."

On the occasion of the battle of Khaibar, the Prophet ﷺ said, "Tomorrow, I shall give the standard to one who is to conquer the fort and who has pleased Allâh and His Messenger." Next morning all the Companions eagerly waited to see who was that fortunate one. The Prophet ﷺ called Ali ؓ and handed over the flag to him and the fort was won as prophesized.

When the Verse concerning *Mubâhalah* was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ called together Ali, Fâtimah, Hasan and Husain ؑ and said, "O Allâh! These are members of my family."

The Prophet ﷺ once said, "Ali is friend of one who is my friend." He then added, "Allâh loves one who loves Ali and shows enmity to one who is the enemy of Ali." The Prophet ﷺ is reported to have once said, "I have been ordered to love four persons." When the Companions asked their names, he revealed, "They are Ali, Abu Dhar, Miqdâd and Salmân Fârisi."

When the Prophet ﷺ formed bonds of brotherhood among the Companions, Ali ؓ came in tears and said, "You have formed bonds of brotherhood for all but me." Thereupon the Prophet ﷺ said, "You are my brother in this world and the next."

Umar ؓ had once said, "Among all of us, Ali is the most prudent." When someone referred to Ali ؓ in front of Âishah ؓ, she remarked, "None more acquainted with *Sunnah* than Ali is now living." Ammâr bin Yâsir ؓ reports that once the Prophet ﷺ said to Ali ؓ, "Most callous of the men are two: one is Ahmar who hamstrung the dromedary of the Prophet Sâleh (ؑ) and the other who will strike a sword to set apart your beard from your body."

## Justice and Words:

Ali ؑ once said, "I thank Allāh that even my enemy seeks my opinion over religious issues. Mu'āwiyah has sought my opinion regarding the inheritance of a eunuch. I let him know that the matter is to be decided according to the form of their private parts. If they are male-like, it will come under the male law; if female-like, it will be treated as female." When Ali ؑ arrived in Basrah, Ibn Al-Kawwa' and Qais bin Ubādah came to him and said, "Some people say that the Prophet ﷺ had promised that you will be installed as caliph after him. Who can be more trustworthy than you in this matter, so we ask you the truth." He replied, "It is quite baseless that the Prophet ﷺ had promised me any such thing. Had it been so, how could I have allowed Abu Bakr and Umar to stand on the pulpit of the Prophet ﷺ and not killed them with my own hands even if I had been alone to do so."

He further said: "The fact is that when the Prophet's illness took a turn for the worse, he asked Abu Bakr to lead the prayers. When Āishah, the Mother of the believers, made an attempt to hold him back from giving such an order, he angrily said, 'You are women of Yusuf's days. Take none but Abu Bakr.' The day the Prophet ﷺ expired, I thought over the matter and I accepted one for my temporal affairs too whom the Prophet ﷺ had chosen for our religious affairs, for he ﷺ was our leader in our religious matters and of our worldly matters too. Thus we thought Abu Bakr is deserving and took *Bai'ah* (oath of allegiance) at his hand and none went against him. I too served him in letter and spirit, obeyed him wholeheartedly, fought as a member of his army and accepted whatever he gave me. He passed away appointing Umar as caliph. I treated Umar also like that and carried out his orders without any flaw. On the eve of Umar's death I thought that he would issue orders in favor of my caliphate with an eye on my being one of the first to embrace Islam, my relationship with the Prophet ﷺ and other qualities. But he, however, dreaded the consequences of picking a man of his own choice. Had he been a man who took notice of his relatives, he would have preferred his son. In short, the task of electing a caliph came into the hands of the Quraish.

When they assembled for the purpose, I thought they would not ignore me. Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf took a promise that we would all obey the one elected as a caliph. He then caught the hand of Uthmân. From this I understood that the promise was taken from me to support someone else. So I took *Bai'ah* at the hand of Uthmân and served him as I did with Abu Bakr and Umar. When he too passed away, I thought those already passed were chosen as our *Imam* (leaders) I become ready to accept *Bai'ah*. Thus the people of Makkah and Al-Madinah and Kufah and Basrah rose to take their *Bai'ah* (oath of allegiance) to me. Now a man has posed as my rival who is not like me either in relationship or knowledge or in order of precedence in embracing Islam, although I deserved caliphate."

A certain person said to Ali عليه السلام, "You had said during an address: 'O Allâh! Bestow on me abilities such as you had given to the Righteous Caliphs,' who were the Rightly-Guided Caliphs in your sight?" Having heard this, Ali عليه السلام replied with tears in his eyes, "Those are my friends Abu Bakr and Umar. Both of them were the leaders of the guided and chiefs of Islam. The Quraish followed them and attained salvation."

Ali abhorred lies. He once was saying something when a certain person said he was lying. Ali عليه السلام cursed him, with the result that the person lost his eyesight before leaving the assembly.

Once two persons sat down to eat. One had five loaves of bread while another had three. Meanwhile, a third person came and they invited him to share with them. When the third person was about to leave, he gave them eight dirhams for what he had eaten. After he left the scene a dispute arose over the division of the eight dirhams. The man with five loaves of bread claimed five dirhams for himself and three dirhams for his partner. The person who had three loaves of bread insisted on half the amount, i.e., four dirhams. This dispute became so intense that they took the matter to Ali عليه السلام. He said to the man with three loaves of bread, "Your loaves of bread were less in number, so three dirhams are more than your correct share; it is better for you to accept it." But he refused to abide by the judgment. Thereupon Ali عليه السلام said to him, "Now you will get only one dirham as your share while your partner gets seven dirhams." Hearing this he was left

astonished. However, while protesting against this decision he asked Ali ؑ to help him to understand his calculations. Ali ؑ said, "Listen! There were eight loaves of breads in all while you were three who shared. Since the breads could not be shared equally, every loaf of bread had to be broken into three pieces making twenty-four in all. Although, it cannot be said who ate more than the other, it may be assumed that each of you took an equal number of pieces, in other words each of you ate eight pieces. Now out of nine pieces of your three breads, the third man ate only one piece and eight pieces went to you; while out of fifteen pieces of your partner's five breads, seven pieces were eaten by the third person and eight pieces went to your partner. Since the third person gave eight dirhams after eating one piece from your bread and seven pieces from those of your partner, you are entitled to have only one dirham while seven dirhams should go to your partner." Hearing this, the person claiming half of the total amount agreed to one dirham without harboring any doubt.

A man lodged a complaint with Ali ؑ against a person that said that he had copulated with his mother in dream. Ali ؑ said giving his judgment, "The man describing the dream should be made to stand in the sun, and his shadow be flogged."

### **Wise Sayings:**

Ali ؑ is reported to have said: "O people establish close relations with your tongue and body, and keep a distance from your hearts and actions. Man will, on the Day of Judgment, get according to what he has done, and he will accompany those that he had loved. Make a supreme effort in making your actions acceptable, for no action finds acceptance without piety and sincerity. O scholar of the Qur'ân, be one who acts on the Qur'ân. A scholar is one who acts upon what he has read and brings about a closeness between his knowledge and his acts. A time will come when there will be great disparity between acts and knowledge. They will sit in a circle to praise one another and ask one coming to join them to sit away from them. Bear in mind deeds have no place in assemblies but they are related to Allâh the Almighty." "Beauty of manners is the essence of man, wisdom is his helper and etiquette his legacy. Barbarism is worse than arrogance."

A person came to Ali ؑ and submitted, "Make me understand what is fate." He said, "Ask it not for it is a dark track." He again put the same question and got a similar reply, "Try not to plunge in it for it is a deep sea." He asked the same question once again and Ali ؑ replied, "It is the secret of Allāh and it has been kept secret from you, why do you try to explore it?" When he repeated his question again, Ali ؑ said, "Tell me whether Allāh the Almighty has made you according to His Will or as per your choice." He said, "Allāh has made me according to His Will." Thereupon Ali ؑ said, "He is then free to make use of you according to His Will, what is your choice then?"

"Every trouble has its limit and when it inflicts anybody, it goes to its extremity. So, whoever is afflicted, he should not indulge in finding remedies as he will be more distressed in it." "It is bestowing to give anything when asked and to give without asking is benevolence. Idleness in prayer, want of subsistence and decrease in taste are all punishments for a sin."

Ali ؑ said to Hasan ؑ in his last counsel, "Wisdom is the greatest wealth while stupidity is the worst pauperism; arrogance is the gravest savageness and beauty of manner is the greatest generosity. Shun the company of a stupid person for he wants to benefit you but puts you to harm. Keep away from a liar, for he brings you closer to what is distant and makes you distant from what is closest. Keep away from a miser too, for he will cause you to renounce what is most wanted by you. Keep not the company of a transgressor, for he will put you on sale very cheaply. None should fear anything except sin and expect nothing from anybody except from Allāh. One should not be ashamed of learning what is unknown to him. When a scholar is asked about something unknown to him, he must unhesitatingly say: 'Allāh knows better.' Patience and Faith are like head and body, when patience leaves, Faith is also no longer there, for how can a body exist without a head. A *Faqih* (Islamic jurist) is one who lets no one lose their faith in Allāh, nor gives permission for committing sins, nor makes one fearless of the torment of Allāh, nor lets one inclined to anything else shun the Qur'ān. Pomegranates should be eaten along with the thin skin that is stuck with the grains, for it helps the food digest with its entry into the stomach. A time is about to come when a believer will be baser than the ordinary slave."

## Important Events of Ali's Caliphate

### Bai'ah of Caliphate

A week after the martyrdom of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ, *Bai'ah* (oath of allegiance) was taken on Dhul-Hijjah 25, 35 AH, at the hands of Ali ؓ in Al-Madinah. Following the martyrdom of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ, his murderers were going strong in Al-Madinah.

At first, they forced the people of Al-Madinah to elect a caliph under threat. The majority of the rioters leaned towards Ali ؓ and the same situation prevailed throughout Al-Madinah. When the people went to Ali ؓ to take *Bai'ah*, he said, "You pledge your allegiance to me but this is not enough unless the Companions of Badr accept me as caliph." Hearing this, they went to the Companions of Badr and brought them in a group to Ali ؓ. First of all Mâlik Ashtar took the *Bai'ah* while others followed him.

Ali ؓ then asked them to find out the intentions of Talhah and Zubair ؓ. Following this, Mâlik Ashtar went to Talhah ؓ and Hukaim bin Jabalah contacted Zubair ؓ and both of them were forcibly brought to Ali ؓ, who told them that he was ready to take *Bai'ah* at the hands of anyone who had a desire to become the Caliph. They flatly rejected the offer. They were then asked to take *Bai'ah* at the hands of Ali ؓ. At this, they began to ponder. Thereupon Mâlik Ashtar said to Talhah ؓ drawing his sword, "The matter is to be decided right now."

In response to the demand of the situation, Talhah ؓ said to Ali ؓ, "I will take *Bai'ah* provided you issue orders to take actions according to the limits set by the Book of Allâh and *Sunnah* of His Messenger, and take *Qisâs* (retaliation) from the murderers of Uthmân bin Affân." Ali ؓ promised to do the needful. Talhah ؓ took *Bai'ah* extending his hand which had become lame following the injuries he received during the battle of Uhud. Some people took it as an ill omen. Zubair ؓ also agreed to take *Bai'ah* with the same conditions put forward by Talhah ؓ.



When Sa'd bin Abu-Waqqâs ؓ was approached, he shut his doors saying, "I shall do it after others have done it." He, however, told them not to expect anything bad from him. Ali ؓ did not press him further.

Abdullah bin Umar ؓ responded in the same way as Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs ؓ. Mâlik Ashtar drew his sword to kill him but Ali ؓ stood surety for him. Abdullah bin Umar ؓ then left for Makkah to perform *Umrah* (the lesser pilgrimage). They cautioned Ali ؓ against Abdullah's activities. Ali ؓ was about to send people to arrest him when Umm Kulthum ؓ, the wife of Umar ؓ and daughter of Ali ؓ intervened and convinced him of the innocence of Abdullah ؓ. Ali ؓ felt satisfied.

Muhammad bin Maslamah, Usâmah bin Zaid, Hassân bin Thâbit, Ka'b bin Mâlik, Abu Saeed Khudri, Nu'mân bin Bashir, Zaid bin Thâbit, Mughirah bin Shu'bah, and Abdullah bin Salâm ؓ also declined to support the new Caliph. Many others, particularly Banu Umayyah stayed away and left for Syria without delay. Ali ؓ asked the Companions staying in Al-Madinah to explain their refusal. They argued that they wanted to keep neutral owing to the prevailing state of disturbances and killings.

Ali ؓ then wanted Marwân bin Al-Hakam to appear but he could not be found. When Nâ'ilah ؓ, the wife of Uthmân ؓ was asked the names of the murderers, she gave the physical appearance of two of them but failed to tell their names. When asked about Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ, she said that he came in but left before the assassination. Some people from Banu Umayyah collected the cut off fingers of Nâ'ilah ؓ and the bloodstained clothes, and proceeded to Syria to meet Mu'âwiyah bin Abu Sufyân ؓ.

## **Second Day of the Caliphate**

Next day Talhah and Zubair ؓ called on Ali ؓ and said that they had pledged their support to him on the condition that retaliation measures would be taken against the murderers of Uthmân ؓ. If he failed to take *Qisâs* (retaliation), their *Bai'ah* would stand as null and void. Ali ؓ said, "I shall take the necessary *Qisâs* from the murderers

of Uthmān, and do full justice to one and all. But until now the rioters are too strong and the state of caliphate has not yet been consolidated, I can only pay attention to this after the return to normalcy. Nothing can be done at present." Both of them went back home. But whispering and murmuring started. The rioters and the murderers of Uthmān grew anxious of their safety while others were dissatisfied with Ali over his lack of action. Thus opposition to the caliphate of Ali began to build up. The new Caliph was rendered helpless by the circumstances.

### **Disobedience of the Rioters**

Three days after assuming charge of the caliphate, Ali asked the people from Kufah, Basrah and Egypt to go back to their respective places, but Abdullah bin Saba refused to obey his orders and most of the rioters sided with him. It was, in truth, the greatest ill omen for the caliphate of Ali that those refused to obey his orders who were apparently the strongest supporters and followers of the new Caliph. Again Talhah and Zubair called on Ali and requested him to send them to Basrah and Kufah to put the people right as they had large followings among them. But Ali grew suspicious and did not allow it.

### **Useful Counsel of Mughirah and Ibn Abbās**

On the third or fourth day after being installed as Caliph, Ali issued orders deposing all the governors appointed by Uthmān bin Affān and replaced them with his own. Knowing this Mughirah bin Shu'bah, a farsighted man and close relative of Ali called on him and said that his decision to hold Talhah and Zubair back from going out of Al-Madinah would have an adverse effect on the Quraish, and he would lose much of their sympathy. Moreover, he (Ali) had deposed the governors of Uthmān's period too hastily. He advised Ali to leave those governors in their places and simply seek their obedience. Ali rejected the advice of Mughirah outright.

The next day Mughirah came again to Ali in the presence of Abdullah bin Abbās. During the conversation, he advised Ali to depose the governors of Uthmān's period without delay. Since he

said that in clear contradiction of his previous advice, Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ remarked when he (Mughirah) left, "Mughirah had given a wise counsel yesterday but he has deceived you today." When Ali ؓ sought his opinion he said, "It was better for you to leave Al-Madinah at the time of Uthmān's martyrdom. But now it is the demand of reason that you keep the governors of Uthmān intact until your caliphate gains stability. If you act too quickly in deposing the governors, Banu Umayyah will create doubt in the minds of people that they were being deposed for demanding *Qisās*."

Hearing this Ali ؓ said, "I shall straighten out Mu'āwiyah with my sword and make no concessions." Ibn Abbās ؓ said, "You are a brave man no doubt but the Prophet ﷺ has said: 'War is deceit.' (Bukhari:3030) So, if you act on my advice, I shall suggest to you such a device that, if you put it into practice, Banu Umayyah are sure to be left wondering without finding any way out." Ali ؓ said, "I possess traits of characters neither like you nor like Mu'āwiyah." Ibn Abbās ؓ said, "As for my opinion, it is better for you to leave for Yanbu and stay there with your doors shut. In such a case the Arabs will go from place to place without finding a worthy man like you. But if you go about with the slayers of Uthmān, they will accuse you of being an accomplice to this heinous act." Ali ؓ said, "I don't consider it proper to act upon your advice; you should rather follow what I say." Ibn Abbās ؓ said, "It is undoubtedly proper for me to carry out your orders." Thereupon Ali ؓ said, "I want to send you as the governor of Syria in place of Mu'āwiyah." Ibn Abbās ؓ said, "Mu'āwiyah is an ancestral brother of Uthmān bin Affān, while I am related to you. So they will kill or arrest me with my entry into Syria. It is better that you first enter into correspondence with Mu'āwiyah and take *Bai'ah* from him." But Ali ؓ rejected the proposal. Mughirah bin Shu'bah ؓ witnessed that Ali ؓ neither acted upon the advice of Ibn Abbās ؓ nor of his own and so Mughirah ؓ left Al-Madinah for Makkah.

## **Deposition and Installation of Governors**

Ali ؓ appointed Uthmān bin Hunaif for Basrah, Umārah bin Shihāb for Kufah, Ubaidullah bin Abbās for Yemen, Qais bin Sa'd for Egypt and Sahl bin Hunaif for Syria.

When Uthmān bin Hunaif reached Basrah, some people accepted him right away and showed their obedience but some others kept quiet to follow the people of Al-Madinah.

Umārah bin Shihāb appointed for Kufah was on his way to Kufah when Tulaiḥah bin Khuwailid came across and advised him to return because the people of Basrah wanted no replacement for Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ. And if he rejected his advice he would kill him then and there. Following this advice he came back.

Ya'la bin Munyah, the governor of Yemen had left for Makkah before the new governor Ubaidullah bin Abbās reached there to take charge peacefully.

When Qais bin Sa'd reached Egypt, some people pledged their allegiance while others delayed it; still others pleaded that they wanted to do nothing before the arrival to Egypt of their fellows from Al-Madinah.

Sahl bin Hunaif on the way to Syria met in Tabuk several horsemen who inquired about him. On the disclosure that he was going as the governor of Syria, they said to him in a firm tone, "If you are going to Syria appointed by somebody other than Uthmān, then it is better for you to go back." Sahl returned from there. By the time he arrived in Al-Madinah, other governors had also reached the capital of Islam.

Jarir bin Abdullah Al-Bajali was governor of Hamadān at the time of the martyrdom of Uthmān ؓ. Ali ؓ wrote him to come to him in Al-Madinah after taking the oath of allegiance of the people of his province, and he reached Al-Madinah accordingly.

### Mu'āwiyah's Support to Truth

Ali ؓ sent a letter to Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ through Ma'bad Aslami. In reply to the letter, Abu Musa ؓ let him know: "The people of Kufah have taken the oath of allegiance at my hands. Most of them have done it with pleasure while others reluctantly.". This letter gave him some satisfaction.

About the same time a letter was sent to Mu'āwiyah ؓ through Jarir bin Abdullah and Sabrah Al-Juhani in Damascus. For three months no

reply came and Mu'āwiyah kept the Caliph's emissary waiting. After that he handed over a sealed letter to his emissary Qabisah Absi and sent him accompanied by Jarir bin Abdullah. The letter was clearly addressed to Ali. They reached in the month of Rabi' Al-Awwal 36 AH. The emissary gave Mu'āwiyah's letter to Ali. When the envelope was opened, it contained no letter. Ali looked towards the emissary angrily. The emissary shuddered from within and said, "I am an emissary and safety of life is my right." Ali said: "Yes, you are safe." The emissary then said, "Nobody will pledge support to you. I have seen sixty thousand souls weeping over the bloodstained shirt of Uthmān bin Affān. They have also put the shirt on the grand mosque of Damascus to provoke the people." Ali said, "They want to take the revenge of Uthmān on me even though I stood absolved from Uthmān's blood. May Allāh deal with the murderers of Uthmān." Saying this, he returned the emissary to Mu'āwiyah.

### **Deviation of the Followers of Ibn Saba**

The rioters and the followers of Abdullah bin Saba abused the emissary and wanted to beat him up but some people saved him and he was some how able to reach Damascus. Jarir bin Abdullah was also accused of being a party to the conspiratorial activities of Mu'āwiyah on account of his long stay in Damascus. As a result of this allegation, he became so frustrated that he went to Qarqaisia instead of Al-Madinah. Mu'āwiyah later called him to Damascus through a messenger.

### **Preparations for the Invasion on Syria**

When the people of Al-Madinah came to know of the strained relations between Ali and Mu'āwiyah, they feared further bloodshed. They sent Ziyād bin Hanzalah to Ali as a feeler. Ali asked him to get ready. "What for?" Ziyād asked. "For invading Syria," Ali firmly replied. "You should deal with them rather politely," he suggested. "No, the insurgents must be punished," Ali said. Knowing the intentions of Ali, both Talhah and Zubair called on Ali and sought permission to go to Makkah to perform Umrah. Ali allowed them to leave Al-Madinah for any further

detention was unreasonable. He then announced throughout Al-Madinah to get ready for the invasion on Syria. Furthermore, he wrote letters to Uthmân bin Hunaif in Basrah, Abu Musa in Kufah and Qais bin Sa'd in Egypt to make military preparations from their respective resources and send them to Al-Madinah on demand.

### **Military Action against the Muslims**

When most of the people of Al-Madinah got ready for this purpose, Ali placed Al-Madinah in the charge of Qatham bin Abbâs and made his son Muhammad bin Hanafiyah the standard-bearer of the Islamic army. Abdullah bin Abbâs the commanding officer of the right wing and Amr bin Abu Salamah that of the left while he put Abu Laila bin Al-Jarrâh, the brother of Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrâh on the vanguard. However, he was cautious enough not to engage anyone from among the rioters for any military service. Ali had not finished the job of allotting military positions when news was given to him that the Makkans were making preparations against him. Following this news he postponed his march against Syria.

### **Preparations of the Mother of the Believers in Makkah**

It has already been mentioned that Aishah had returned to Makkah on hearing the news of Uthmân's martyrdom. On reaching near to Makkah she was also told that the people of Al-Madinah had taken the oath of allegiance at the hands of Ali. She returned to Makkah in such a state that people grouped around her mount.

She said to them, "By Allâh Uthmân has been killed without any fault and I shall take revenge on his behalf. It is unfortunate that people collecting from the outskirts of the cities and forests, and the slaves of Al-Madinah opposed Uthmân simply because he had appointed governors from our youths, although his predecessors had also done this. When the rioters failed to establish their claim, they rose against Uthmân and committed a breach of trust. They shed the blood declared prohibited by Allâh the Almighty; they committed bloodshed in the city that Allâh the Almighty had made the place of migration for His Messenger, and did it in the month when

hostilities are forbidden and plundered property unlawfully. By Allāh even a finger of Uthmān is superior to all the world. Uthmān is free from the blame they have put on him."

Abdullah bin Āmir Hadrami was the governor of Makkah appointed by Uthmān bin Affān ؓ. When he heard Āishah ؓ, he said very firmly, "I will be the first to take revenge of Uthmān's blood."

Hearing this all the men from Banu Umayyah who had reached Makkah after the martyrdom of Uthmān ؓ, rose in support of action against the murderers. Saeed bin Al-Āsi and Walid bin Uqbah were also among them. Abdullah bin Āmir had reached Makkah after being deposed from the governorship of Basrah, while Ya'la bin Munyah had come from Yemen along with six hundred camels and six hundred thousand dinars. They all sat together to find a way of avenging the blood of Uthmān ؓ.

When Talhah and Zubair ؓ reached Makkah from Al-Madinah, Āishah ؓ sent for both and inquired of them the reason behind their arrival in Makkah. They gave the reason that the rioters being in control, the noble and saner people found it totally unsafe to live in Al-Madinah. Āishah ؓ then said, "You should then rise against them along with us." Both of them expressed their favor and support to this plan. The entire population of Makkah was obedient to the Mother of the believers. Four persons, Abdullah bin Āmir and Ya'la bin Munyah, the former governors of Basrah and Yemen, Talhah and Zubair, were among the commanders of Āishah's army and considered to be men of sense and determination.

At first, advice came from someone to proceed to Syria avoiding Al-Madinah. But the proposal was set aside because of Mu'āwiyah's power and capacity to keep Syria intact. Then came the proposal to proceed to Basrah for Abdullah bin Āmir ؓ had a considerable circle of his friends and well-wishers and Talhah ؓ also had influence over the people of Basrah. Thus they had hope of getting much support there.

Someone suggested to face the eventualities in Makkah but Abdullah bin Amir ؓ stated that the Makkans would not be able to withstand the onslaught of the army of Al-Madinah. Moreover the joint forces of Makkah and Basrah would be enough to face any danger.

In short, the proposal gained general support and preparation for Basrah began in full swing. Other Mothers of the believers too expressed their desire to accompany Âishah ؓ. When Abdullah Umar ؓ was contacted, he pleaded in support of the people of Al-Madinah. He also stopped Hafsah ؓ from accompanying Âishah ؓ to Basrah. Mughirah bin Shu'bah ؓ had also reached Makkah, he too accompanied the army.

### **Departure from Makkah to Basrah**

Abdullah bin Âmir and Ya'la bin Munciyah ؓ had come to Makkah with a large amount of money and goods from Basrah and Yemen. Thus they took an active part in organizing the army of Âishah ؓ. Before the departure it was announced in Makkah that Âishah, Talhah and Zubair ؓ were leaving for Basrah and the people sympathetic to Islam and demanding retaliation for the blood of Uthmân ؓ were invited to join their party. Thus an army of one and a half thousand people marched to Basrah. People began to join on the way and the army very soon swelled to three thousand. Umm Fadl bint Al-Hârith ؓ the mother of Abdullah bin Abbâs ؓ happened to be with the force. She sent Zafar, a person from Juhainah tribe as a courier to Ali ؓ with a letter containing a detailed account of the mission.

The other Mothers of believers accompanied Âishah ؓ returned to Al-Madinah from Dhat-Irq. Mughirah bin Shu'bah, Saeed bin Al-Âs and some others also left army on the base of some differences.

### **The Governor of Basrah opposes the Plan**

When the army came close to Basrah, Âishah ؓ sent Abdullah bin Âmir ؓ into the city with letters in the names of the distinguished personalities of Basrah and awaited their response. When Uthmân bin Hunaif, the governor of Basrah came to know of the arrival of Âishah ؓ he sent to her some influential persons of Basrah as emissaries. They called on the Mother of the believers and inquired about the reason behind their arrival. She said explaining the reason, "The rioters and miscreants from some tribes have spread rumors in order



to create confusion in the Muslim ranks and put Islam to harm. I have, therefore come out to put such elements to right and acquaint them with the real facts." They got up and called on Talhah and Zubair and put to them the same question. Giving their own reason, they said, "We have come out to avenge the blood of Uthmān." They said, "Haven't you two taken *Bai'ah* at the hands of Ali?" They replied, "Yes, we pledged out support to Ali provided he avenge the blood of Uthmān. Moreover, swords were then hanging over our heads." The emissaries went back to Uthmān bin Hunaif in Basrah and communicated to him the whole account. He heard all this with an element of shock and asked their opinion. They asked him to be patient. But he expressed his resolve to keep holding them back until the arrival of Ali. The emissaries left and closed their doors upon themselves.

Uthmān bin Hunaif gave a call to the people of Basrah to get ready to fight and to assemble in the mosque. When people assembled, Uthmān bin Hunaif asked a man named Qais to address the audience. He said, "People! If Talhah, Zubair and their people have come to seek safety, there is something wrong for even the birds of Makkah are safe and nobody can do them any harm. And if they have arrived for avenging the blood of Uthmān bin Affān, then we are not the murderers. It seems more proper to send them back with honor." Hearing this, Aswad bin Sari' Sa'di got up and said, "They have not come here taking us to be the slayers of Uthmān bin Affān, they have rather come to us to seek our help against the slayers of Uthmān bin Affān." With these words uttered at the moment, the people got infuriated and began to hurl gravel at Qais and the session ended in confusion and disorder. It was, however, gathered that Talhah and Zubair had a following in Basrah.

### **Battle-Array**

When Aishah came up to Mirbad at the head of her army, Uthmān bin Hunaif came out with his own and a battle line was drawn. Talhah was on the right wing and Zubair on the left. When the two armies came face to face, Talhah emerged first of all and described the excellences of Uthmān after glorifying Allāh the

Almighty, and then appealed for avenging the blood of the martyred. Then came out Zubair ؓ and testified to what Talhah ؓ had said. Following this Âishah ؓ uttered some words of wise counsel. The impact of her speech divided the people of Uthmân bin Hunaif into two groups.

While one group was still adamant, another gave up the idea of fighting for the reason that fighting against Talhah and Zubair ؓ was not justified. When Âishah, Talhah and Zubair ؓ witnessed the rift in their ranks they returned to their camp. However, Uthmân bin Hunaif remained firm. Moreover, he sent Jâriah bin Qudâmah to Âishah ؓ and he said, "O Mother of the believers! The assassination of Uthmân was far better than your coming out on the back of this wretched camel. Allâh the Almighty has made you to observe *Hijâb* (veil) but you put the *Hijâb* to disgrace. If you have come here of your own, it is better for you to go back to Al-Madinah; if by force, then seek Allah's help." The speech had not ended when Hukaim bin Jabalah attacked the army of Âishah ؓ. But the battle stopped in the evening. The next day Hukaim bin Jabalah drew the battle line again and the two forces attacked one another. Hukaim was killed on the battlefield and Uthmân bin Hunaif had to taste defeat.

Basrah was captured by Talhah and Zubair ؓ. Uthmân bin Hunaif was brought as a captive. But Âishah ؓ ordered him to be set free. He went straight to Ali ؓ. Although Basrah came under the sway of Âishah, Talhah and Zubair ؓ, the condition was not different from the rule of Uthmân bin Hunaif, as Basrah was still a mixture of elements for and against the winner.

### **Ali ؓ marches from Al-Madinah**

When Ali ؓ was informed of the developments in Makkah and Basrah, he expressed shock and grief and gave the people a call to fight with the insurgents. Even though fighting against Âishah, Talhah and Zubair ؓ was an unpleasant act for the people of Al-Madinah, most of them responded to the call when they saw Abul-Haitham Badari, Ziyâd bin Hanzalah, Khuzaimah bin Thâbit and Abu Qatâdah ؓ had approved. He left Al-Madinah at the end of Rabi' Al-Akhir 36 AH. Some groups of the Kufis and Egyptians joined Ali ؓ.

## **Abdullah bin Saba—the Jew and Hypocrite**

Abdullah bin Saba also joined the army of Ali ؑ along with his followers. Abdullah bin Salām ؑ came across them on the way and said holding the bridle of Ali's horse, "O Chief of the believers; go not from Al-Madinah. By Allāh, if you go out, no head of the Muslims will ever come back to Al-Madinah." The people rushed towards Abdullah calling him bad names. Ali ؑ asked the people to leave him, saying he was a good man from among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. When he moved further ahead, he was informed to his shock that Talhah and Zubair ؓ had already marched into Basrah.

Ali ؑ halted at Rabadhah and sent orders to various parts of the country from here. Moreover, he sent Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ and Muhammad bin Ja'far ؓ to Kufah to collect and bring people. Since the people disliked to fight with Talhah and Zubair ؓ, Ali ؑ promised not to attack them unless they forced him to fight back. A little ahead of Rabadhah, a party from the Tai tribe joined the army. Amr bin Al-Jarrāh was put on the vanguard. At Faïd, they came across a person coming from Kufah. When he was asked about Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ, he remarked, "If you have not come out to make peace with Talhah and Zubair, Abu Musa will not help you."

Ali ؑ observed, "Talhah and Zubair first pledged their allegiance to me and then committed a breach of trust. They obeyed Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthmān but have opposed me, if they but knew that I am not different from them," saying this he cursed Talhah and Zubair ؓ.

## **The Two Muhammads in Kufah**

When Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ and Muhammad bin Ja'far ؓ gave the letter of Ali ؑ to Abu Musa ؓ in Kufah and tried to persuade the people to join the camp of Ali ؑ, they showed no interest. When Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ insisted, they remarked, "Going out to fight is a temporal affair while sitting in peace is the way to the Hereafter." Others kept to the line. When Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ and Muhammad bin Ja'far ؓ got angry and behaved rudely to Abu Musa ؓ he said, "The Bai'ah to Uthmān still hangs

round Ali's and my neck. If fighting is necessary, the murderers of Uthmân should be fought wherever they are met." They returned empty-handed and gave the account to Ali ﷺ at Dhi Qâr.

### **Ashtar and Ibn Abbâs ﷺ in Kufah**

When the mission of Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ﷺ and Muhammad bin Ja'far ﷺ failed to bring any fruit, Ali ﷺ asked Ashtar to go with Ibn Abbâs ﷺ and try to bring Abu Musa ﷺ around to their point of view. They reached Kufah and tried their level best to persuade him but he remained adamant in his opinion to the last and this mission too failed.

### **Ammâr bin Yâsir and Hasan bin Ali ﷺ in Kufah**

On the return of Ashtar and Ibn Abbâs ﷺ, Ali ﷺ sent his son Hasan ﷺ and Ammâr bin Yâsir ﷺ to Kufah. Being informed of their arrival, Abu Musa ﷺ came to the mosque. He embraced Hasan ﷺ and said addressing Ammâr bin Yâsir ﷺ, "You joined the transgressors instead of lending support to Uthmân." Ammâr ﷺ denied the charge. Meanwhile, Hasan ﷺ spoke out that people held no consultations with them and they had nothing in mind but putting the matter right. Moreover, the Chief of the believers feared none in his task of bringing reforms to the people. Abu Musa ﷺ said with due respect, "May my mother and father be sacrificed for you, you spoke the truth. But the Prophet ﷺ has said, 'Affliction is to be caused in the near future. In such a situation the sitting one will be better than the standing and the standing will be better than the mounted. And all the Muslims are brethren among themselves. Their blood and possessions are prohibited for each other.'" Abu Musa's statement enraged Ammâr bin Yâsir ﷺ and he called him bad names. Abu Musa ﷺ kept quite. But some people fell on Ammâr but Abu Musa saved him.

During these days Âishah ﷺ wrote letters to the people of Kufah from Basrah advising them not to lend support to anyone and either sit behind closed doors or come to their help for they have come out to avenge the blood of Uthmân. Zaid bin Suhân began to read out the

letter to the audience. Shabath bin Rib'i hurled abuse which caused anger in the audience, and they openly rose in support of Âishah. Abu Musa got up to pacify and advise them to keep indoors, provide shelter to the oppressed, and keep the points of their spears down and their swords sheathed.

Hearing all this, Zaid bin Suhân asked the audience to lend help and support to Ali. A few others followed suit. Thereupon Ammâr bin Yâsir said, "People! Ali has called you to give your due. Come out and help him." Following this Hasan bin Ali spoke: "O people! Accept our invitation, obey us and help us in this present crisis. The Chief of the believers says, 'Help us if we are victims and force us to get your due if we are wrongdoers.' He has also said, 'Talhah and Zubair had taken *Bai'ah* at my hand first and then broke it before others.'" The speech produced the desired effect at once and they rose in support of the Caliph. Mâlik Ashtar was also sent after Hasan and Ammâr, he reached Kufah at a time when Hasan bin Ali was speaking to the people. His presence added to the zeal of the people and nobody was ready to listen to Abu Musa Ash'ari.

Hasan bin Ali, Ammâr bin Yâsir and Ashtar left Kufah at the head of a nine thousand strong army and were greeted by Ali at Dhi Qâr. Speaking highly of them the Caliph Ali said, "I have troubled you, O people of Kufah to join us in fighting the people of Basrah. However, if they change their mind, it is most welcome, but if they insist on their viewpoint, we shall treat them politely so that we are not accused of initiating atrocities." Having heard this, the people of Kufah joined the army of Ali at Dhi Qâr. Next day, Ali sent Qa'qâ' bin Amr towards Basrah. It was here that Owais Qarni took the oath of allegiance at the hands of Ali.

## **Endeavor for Mediation**

Ali had sent Qa'qâ' bin Amr to Basrah to know what was on the minds of Âishah, Talhah and Zubair and to bring them to the path of peace taking or renewing their *Bai'ah*. Qa'qâ' was very eloquent and wise. He first submitted to Âishah: "What has led you to such an act and what do you want?" She replied, "My sole aim is to bring reforms to the people and put them on the line set by the

Qur'ân." He then put the same question to Talhah and Zubair and got the same reply. Thereupon Qa'qâ' bin Amr said, "If your aim is to make the people follow the Qur'ân, the purpose cannot be achieved by the way you like it." They said, "The Qur'ân enjoins *Qisâs* (retaliation) and we want to take it." Qa'qâ' said, "How *Qisâs* can be taken this way? Establishment and stability of the caliphate are among the top priorities, which bring peace and solidarity and may ensure avenging the blood of Uthmân. Now, in the absence of peace and order and any administrative system, how is anybody within his rights to take *Qisâs*. You have killed a large number of people here in Basrah just for the taking of *Qisâs* for Uthmân, but Hurqus bin Zuhair could not be caught. And in the wake of chasing him, six thousand men stood at his back to fight with his opponents and you gave up chasing him. In the same way, you should have waited if Ali could not take *Qisâs* on account of his preoccupations in curbing violence and consolidating power. How reasonable is it for you to stand against them and thus aggravate the situation? In such a situation, violence will grow and the murderers of Uthmân will remain safe from *Qisâs*."

Saying all this, Qa'qâ' bin Amr said in a heart-rending tone: "The greatest reform at this time is to make peace with one another so that the Muslims as a whole should live in peace and safety. You are the leaders of virtues and stars of guidance. By Allâh, keep from pushing us into some trial lest you will not be able to be safe and the Muslim *Ummah* will also pass through a great ordeal."

Âishah, Talhah and Zubair were immediately moved at the utterance of Qa'qâ' and they said with one voice: "If Ali nourishes such a thought and he has in mind his duty of taking *Qisâs*, there is no point in any dispute. Until now we thought he had some soft corner in his heart for the murderers with the result they have joined Ali's army and carry out his orders." Qa'qâ' bin Amr said, "What I have said is the reflection of Ali's thought." They said, "We too then have nothing to do against him." Qa'qâ' then proceeded to the army of Ali. A group of influential people of Basrah also accompanied him. They wanted to know whether Ali and the people of Kufah were inclined to peace or not. They were informed that, people were saying

about Ali ؑ that after conquering Basrah, he will kill the youths and make their women and children slaves. This rumor was spread by the followers of Abdullah bin Saba in Basrah who were a part of Ali's army.

When Qa'qâ' bin Amr ؑ appeared before Ali ؑ and gave the whole account of his success in Basrah, he expressed great joy. The people of Basrah then asked the people of Kufah who formed a part of Ali's army about their intentions. They spoke in favor of peace. Following this, Ali ؑ called them and referred to his efforts to make peace. They showed satisfaction and left with the good news.

### **Consultations for Mischief-Making**

After the beginning of the peace mission, Ali ؑ concentrated his army and delivered an eloquent and impressive speech. He then ordered a march to Basrah the next day. He made it clear that the movement was not meant for fighting but for bringing peace. Besides this, he asked those to keep away who had surrounded the house of Uthmân bin Affân ؑ. Learning this, Abdullah bin Saba and the Egyptians grew anxious.

This group that was isolated from the rest of Ali's army, numbered about two to two-and-a-half thousand men, some being very clever and influential among them. Abdullah bin Saba held consultations with various groups in a special assembly, which included Abdullah bin Saba, Ibn Muljam, Ashtar and his gang including Ilba bin Al-Haitham Sadusi, Sâlim bin Tha'labah and Shuraih bin Aufa etc. Giving vent to their feelings they said, "Talhah and Zubair have been demanding Qisâs and now Ali seems to be backing their cause. He asked today to keep us separate from the army, tomorrow, after joining hands with them, he will take Qisâs and punish us all." Ashtar said, "Talhah, Zubair and Ali are all one in their opinion concerning us. Now the pillar of peace will be erected on our blood. So, in my opinion, Talhah, Zubair and Ali should also be sent to Uthmân. This will be the end of all our troubles." Abdullah bin Saba who was presiding over the assembly, further said, "You are small in number while Ali has an army of twenty thousand behind him. Talhah and Zubair have another thirty thousand troops with them. Thus our job

is very difficult." Sâlim bin Tha'labah suggested, "We should leave for some where else until peace is restored." Shuraih seconded the proposal. But Abdullah bin Saba rejected it as useless. Everyone then rose to give his own suggestion. At last they turned to Abdullah bin Saba to put forward his suggestion. He then said, "Brethren. It is better for all of us to keep within the army of Ali. In case he expels us, we should remain at a close distance from his army base on the reason that we want to help his army in case a battle breaks out. Moreover, we should leave no stone unturned to arouse both sides to fight one another. Once the battle begins, our troubles are gone."

## **The Battle of Jamal**

The next morning Ali ؑ gave marching orders to his army. A section of the rioters accompanied the army while the other part kept itself at a little distance. Bakr bin Wâ'il and Abdul-Qais clans joined the army on the way. In Basrah, Ali ؑ pitched his tents at the grounds of Ubaidullah Palace. From the opposite side, the army of Âishah, Talhah and Zubair ؑ came to the same ground. Both sides kept silent for three days awaiting the result of the ongoing peace talks.

In the meantime someone said to Ali ؑ, "Why have you come here?" Ali ؑ said, "I am here to curb the disturbances and bring about peace for the Muslims." The man said, "What will you do if the people of Basrah reject your peace efforts?" Ali ؑ said, "We shall leave them to their state of affairs." He then said, "You may leave them but what will you do if they are not ready to leave you." Ali ؑ said, "In such a situation we shall defend ourselves."

Meanwhile another person spoke out, "Talhah and Zubair maintain that they have revolted to seek the Pleasure of Allâh. Do they, in your opinion, have any right in support of avenging the blood of Uthmân?" Ali ؑ replied, "Yes, they also have a right." He then said, "Do you also have a reason for delaying *Qisâs*?" Ali ؑ replied, "Yes, when something becomes doubtful, one should take cautious steps before going into action." The same person said again, "What will follow for them and for us in case a battle breaks out?" Ali ؑ said, "The person killed on both sides will go to heaven."



After this, Ali ﷺ sent Hakim bin Salāmah and Mālik bin Habib to Talhah and Zubair ﷺ to know if they were still firm on the peace talks held between them and Qa'qā' bin Amr ﷺ; if so, they should keep from starting a battle until the matter is finalized. Talhah and Zubair ﷺ told Ali ﷺ that they maintained their promise. Following this Talhah and Zubair ﷺ came out from their ranks responding while Ali ﷺ too emerged from his side and they all came very near to one another. Ali ﷺ then said addressing Talhah ﷺ, "You have collected this army against me. Could you give an excuse for your action and prove it valid? Am I not your brother in Faith? Is not our blood unlawful for each other?" Talhah ﷺ replied, "Have you not hatched a conspiracy to kill Uthmān?" Ali ﷺ replied, "Allāh the Almighty knows everything and He will send His curse on the killers of Uthmān. And Talhah, have you not taken *Bai'ah* at my hands?" Talhah ﷺ replied, "Of course, I have taken *Bai'ah* but with a sword hanging over my head, and on the condition of your taking *Qisās* from the killers of Uthmān."

Following this, Ali ﷺ turned to Zubair ﷺ and said, "Do you remember that the Prophet ﷺ had once told you that you will fight someone and you will then be a wrongdoer?" Having heard this Zubair ﷺ said, "Yes, now I remember. But why did you not remind me before my departure from Al-Madinah? Had it been in my mind, I would not have left the city, I will not fight with you any more." [This talk and the like of it is not approved by the research scholars to be true.]

In the wake of this talk, Zubair ﷺ came back to his army and called on Āishah ﷺ and said, "Ali has today reminded me something following which I will not fight with him at any cost. I have now decided to go off leaving all others." Āishah ﷺ was also nourishing such an idea for the prophecy of the Prophet ﷺ on her mind. But before her reply to Zubair ﷺ, Abdullah bin Zubair ﷺ came in and said to his father, "You decide to leave when you have already brought both sides to the battlefield and incited one against another. It seems the huge army of Ali has sent terror into your heart and made you a coward." Hearing this, Zubair ﷺ got up and moved with his weapons into the army of Ali ﷺ, walked around and came back.

When Ali ﷺ noticed him drawing near, he asked his men not to obstruct his movement. Thus nobody showed disrespect to him.

Zubair ﷺ then said to his son, "Had I been afraid of Ali's army, I would not have gone there all alone. The fact is this that I have vowed not to fight with him." Abdullah ﷺ then asked his father to set his slave free as an atonement for his vow. Zubair ﷺ said, "I have seen Ammâr in the army of Ali, and I remember the Prophet ﷺ had once said: 'A rebel will kill Ammâr.' In short, the thought of fighting has gone out of my mind." Encouraged by such a peaceful atmosphere, Abdullah bin Abbâs ﷺ went to Zubair and Talhah ﷺ from Ali's side and Muhammad bin Talhah ﷺ came to Ali ﷺ on behalf of Zubair and Talhah ﷺ and the peace terms were finalized by the evening of the third day. The peace document was decided to be written and signed the next morning.

Within these three days, Abdullah bin Saba and his party could not avail themselves of any opportunity to create mischief. They grew vehemently anxious when they came to know that the peace document between the two sides was about to be signed the next morning. They went into emergency consultations, which continued the whole night. At last they fell upon the army of Zubair and Talhah ﷺ. They made a column their target, which answered back and a full-fledged battle resulted.

Loud cries of war made Talhah and Zubair ﷺ come out of their tents. On inquiry they were told that Ali's troops had attacked their army. Thereupon Talhah ﷺ remarked, "Ali will not rest without bloodshed." The hue and cry of fighting drew Ali ﷺ out of his tent and the followers of Abdullah bin Saba told him that Talhah and Zubair ﷺ had attacked his army all of a sudden and forced his men to fight back. Ali ﷺ passed almost the same remark saying, "Alas, Talhah and Zubair will not rest without bloodshed." Following this, he started issuing orders to various sections of his troops. Fierce fighting enveloped the battlefield. Military commanders on both sides were unaware of what led to the all-out battle. However, both sides appeared not to chase the fleeing soldiers nor attack the wounded nor seize the property of their opponents. These calls from both sides established beyond doubt that despite the fighting, neither of the

sides had any feeling of hatred. Both camps were expressing disgust over what was going on.

Ka'b bin Sur went to Âishah ؓ and said, "The battle has begun. It is better for you to mount on a camel and go to the battlefield. Maybe your presence hold them back from fighting and pave the way for peace efforts to begin." Hearing this she mounted on the camel. As a precautionary measure armor was put on her litter and the camel was made to stand at a place from where the sight of battle was perfectly clear. But things went contrary to this plan and the flames of war leapt higher and higher.

Fighters from her camp were filled with great fervor when they saw her on the battlefield as if she had come to increase the enthusiasm of her troops. Soon after the beginning of the battle, an arrow hit the leg of Talhah ؓ and his sock was filled with blood, which was flowing profusely without stop. When Qa'qâ' ؓ who was fighting on behalf of Ali ؓ, noticed the plight of Talhah ؓ, he came near to him and said, "O Abu Muhammad! Your wound is very serious; it is advisable that you go back to Basrah at once." He did accordingly. But as soon as he entered Basrah, he fell unconscious, died and was buried there. Marwân bin Al-Hakam was fighting on behalf of Talhah and Zubair ؓ.

Talhah ؓ was not in favor of fighting with Ali ؓ and stood alone away from his army. He wanted to keep neutral, for he was pondering over the utterances of Ali ؓ, in the talks between Ali and Zubair ؓ and the prophecy about Ammâr bin Yâsir ؓ. The more he thought over the issue of war, the more he became disheartened and discouraged. When Marwân bin Hakam witnessed his indifference to the ongoing battle, he felt tremendously annoyed. He then gave his slave a sign who covered his face with a sheet. Thus being his identity concealed, Marwân took an arrow dipped in poison and targeted Talhah ؓ. The poisoned arrow hit the leg of Talhah ؓ and pierced the stomach of his horse, which fell down along with its rider. Talhah ؓ then called the slave of Ali ؓ who had appeared on the scene and renewed his *Bai'ah* to Ali ؓ either on his hand or at the hand of Qa'qâ' ؓ who also was there. After the renewal of the *Bai'ah*, he returned to Basrah and passed away. When Ali ؓ came to know of

this, he invoked the blessing of Allāh for him and kept admiring and expressing sorrow for him.

### **Peacemaking Efforts of Zubair ؓ**

When the battle broke out, Zubair bin Al-Awwām ؓ, who had already decided not to fight, held himself back. Ammār ؓ noticed him and threw a challenge to fight. But he refused to fight with him. Since Ammār ؓ considered him the root of the trouble, he made an advance and attacked him. But Zubair ؓ kept defending himself without hitting him until Ammār ؓ became exhausted and Zubair ؓ had an opportunity to get away. Ahnaf bin Qais from Basrah was lying with a large number of men encamped separately as a neutral force. When Zubair ؓ passed by his camp, Amr bin Al-Jurmuz, a man from the army of Ahnaf bin Qais, followed him. He went near to him and began to move along with him. In order to dispel any doubt, he asked Zubair ؓ to give his opinion on some issue. Arriving at As-Saba Valley, Zubair ؓ stood in prayer. And as he lay prostrate, Amr bin Al-Jurmuz struck him with his weapon and came straight to Ali ؓ. Someone informed Ali ؓ that the assassin of Zubair ؓ had come to meet him. He gave him permission with the remark, "Let him come in and give him good news of hell as well." When Ali ؓ saw Zubair's sword in his hand, tears came down from his eyes and he said, "O tyrant! This is the sword which had guarded the Prophet ﷺ for long." These words cast such an effect that the assassin thrust his own sword into his belly after passing some disrespectful remarks against Ali ؓ and thus went to Hell.

### **Separation of Talhah ؓ**

Talhah and Zubair ؓ kept themselves apart right from the beginning of the battle. But small chieftains of various clans were firm in their resolve to fight on behalf of Āishah ؓ. But she also, on the other hand, was in favor of peace and agreement. Moreover, there was none left on their side to lead and guide in the fight. They did not even know the real intention of Āishah ؓ under whom they claimed to be fighting. However, she could not hold her troops back, they were all under the impression that Ali ؓ had deceived them by his sneak

attack after the peace negotiations were about to be finalized. The people of Basrah had in mind the rumor that Ali ؑ had a plan to kill their men and enslave their women and children.

As a result of these misgivings, more than ten thousand Muslims gave their lives for no cause. And up to the last nobody knew the real cause behind the ordeal. Every individual appeared to be accusing his rival for the calamity that happened. Ali ؑ was himself in command of his army and he was organizing such fierce attacks on the opponents that they were repulsed. Ali's army made such an advance that Âishah's camel had come within the range of attack. Ka'b was holding the halter of Âishah's camel and it was he who had escorted the Mother of the believers to battlefield hoping for peace. The swordsmen of Basrah clustered around Âishah's camel to save it at the cost of their lives with the result the battle took a very serious turn.

In the wake of such a bloody battle, Âishah ؓ asked Ka'b to leave the halter and advance raising the Qur'ân and calling the people to follow the dictates of the Book of Allâh. Ka'b did accordingly. But the followers of Abdullah bin Saba showered arrows on him and he was honored with martyrdom. This tragic event filled the people of Basrah with zeal and fervor and in a short while there was a heap of dead bodies around the camel of Âishah ؓ. The people of Basrah were laying down their lives to save the camel of Âishah ؓ. It became clear to Ali ؑ that the presence of Âishah ؓ in the battlefield would never allow the situation to cool down, for her mount had become the center of killing and bloodshed. There were heavy showers of arrows on her litter from all sides and she was cursing the murderers of Uthmân ؓ. [These arrows were exposing the reality of Islam and Faith of those who were showering them.]

Ali ؑ ordered his men to target the camel, for its fall would bring the battle to its end. After a number of attacks and counterattacks someone got an opportunity to strike the legs of camel, which made it sit down with a shriek. With the fall of the camel, the supporters of Âishah ؓ dispersed. Qa'qâ' bin Amr ؓ hurried to the spot and asked Ali's men to surround the camel on all sides. Ali ؑ asked Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ to take care of his sister and see that she suffers no harm.

When her litter was taken out of the heap of the dead bodies and put at a distance, Ali ؑ reached there and sent his greetings and compliments to her and said, "Dear mother! How are you? May Allāh forgive all your sins." Āishah ؑ replied, "May Allāh forgive your sins too!" Following this, commanders of various columns appeared to greet the Mother of the believers. Āishah ؑ then said to Qa'qâ' ؑ: "I wish I had died twenty years before the event of this day." When Qa'qâ' ؑ related this to Ali ؑ, he too said, "I wish I had died twenty years before this event."

This battle became known as the battle of Jamal (camel) because the camel Āishah ؑ was riding, had turned to be the center of fighting. The supporters of Āishah ؑ numbered thirty thousand out of which nine thousand were killed, while one thousand seventy men out of twenty thousand laid down their lives from the side of Ali ؑ. [But the fact is that about five thousand from each side were killed in this battle (*Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah*, 7/218). Besides the number of the fighters described here seems to be exaggerated and opposite to each other.]

Ali ؑ led the funeral prayers of all the slain and had them buried. He also announced that those establishing their respective rights on them could take the goods and properties away. When evening set in, Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؑ took his sister, the Mother of the believers, to Basrah and entrusted her to Safiyyah bint Al-Hārith bin Abu Talhah in the house of Abdullah bin Khalaf Khuẓā'i.

The next day, Ali ؑ made his entry into Basrah where the people took Bai'ah at his hands. Afterwards, Ali ؑ came to Āishah ؑ. Since Abdullah bin Khalaf had lost his life in the battle, his mother greeted him with loud reproaches. But Ali ؑ gave no reply. Although, the people accompanying him showed displeasure, Ali ؑ said to them, "Since women are weak by nature, we forgive even the polytheist women and these are the Muslim women." Ali ؑ then showing the highest regard, asked the Mother of the believers if she suffered any trouble.

Complete peace was restored and good faith prevailed on both sides. Each of them apologized for the actions taken. Abdullah bin Abbās ؑ was then appointed the governor of Basrah. Ali ؑ asked Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؑ later to make preparations for the

journey. Thus, in Rajab 36 AH, Ali ؑ bade farewell to Âishah ؓ in the company of forty ladies of influential families of Basrah headed by Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ. He himself escorted the Mother of the believers for several miles then the charge was handed over to Hasan bin Ali ؓ. She arrived at Makkah, stayed there until Dhul-Hijjah, and then left for Al-Madinah in 37 AH after performing *Hajj*.

A number of men from Banu Umayyah had also taken part in the battle of Jamal against Ali ؑ. The battle being over, they left for Damascus to meet Mu'âwiyah ؓ. Abdullah bin Zubair ؓ who had received injuries in the battle, took shelter in the house of a man from Azd tribe in Basrah. Âishah ؓ sent for him through her brother, Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ, and took him to Makkah.

### **One more Mischief of the Saba Sect**

After sending Âishah ؓ from Basrah, Ali ؑ distributed cash from the treasury of Basrah among those who had fought under his banner. Each of them received five hundred dirhams. Following this, he told his men that in case of their attack and victory over Syria, their fixed amount of stipend would be increased but they would be entitled to get the same amount from the booty.

The followers of Abdullah bin Saba started criticizing and reproaching Ali ؑ openly following the end of the battle. They had grown hostile simply because Ali ؑ had strongly forbidden plunder of the goods and property. Ali's soft attitude, counseling and all peaceful efforts to make them see reason, fell on deaf ears until one day they disappeared from Basrah.

Anticipating their mischief, Ali ؑ chased them at the head of an army but they were not found. It is to be noted here that Abdullah bin Saba had been the greatest supporter of Ali ؑ. However, the conquest of Basrah had taken away from him the opportunity to inflict anymore loss and harm to Islam by supporting Ali ؑ, so he turned against Ali ؑ to continue his work against the cause of Islam. It was, in truth, the same group consisting of the Muslim-like Jews and anti-Islamic elements which later rose in the guise of the Khawârij.



Soon after the martyrdom of Umar Fāruq ؓ, conspiracies, secret societies and bodies of forces antagonistic to Islam sprang into being and they still continue. No period in the history of Islam passed without them. They sometimes appeared in the guise of Abu Lulu' and his inciters and at times in the shape of Abdullah bin Saba and his followers and the Khawârij. The same agency worked against Banu Umayyah through the Abbasids and Alawis and then against the Abbasids through the Umayyads. Sometimes they appeared as Fidâi Ismâili group. The same secret societies appeared in the guise of Freemasons, Nihilists and Anarchists and sometimes it put on the garb of diplomacy in the foreign officers.

Even the early period of the Prophetic era was not free from these secret conspiracies. Not more than twenty or twenty-five years was there free from these activities and the period spanned the later part of Prophethood and the Caliphates of Abu Bakr and Umar ؓ. Thus the conspiracies hatched against the Islamic forces were neither strange nor surprising.

The people of the Saba sect who had disappeared from Basrah after openly criticizing Ali ؓ, spread in a large area of Arab and Iraq, and collected around them ruffians and riffraff who had their own axes to grind. They proceeded first to Sajastan to set against Ali ؓ all the Persian provinces one by one so that he would not be able to manage the affairs of the State peacefully, and not find an opportunity to invade Syria. Being informed of their antagonistic activities, Ali ؓ sent Abdur-Rahmân bin Jurw Tai with a detachment but he was martyred in the encounter. Hearing this Rib'i bin Kâs marched with a detachment of four thousand and defeated the miscreants. In the meantime, preparations for the battle of Siffin took a start. Now, the opportunist Saba clandestinely became a part of Ali's army to take advantage of the situation.

### **Kufah becomes the Capital**

The most important task before Ali ؓ following the battle of Jamal was to subdue Syria and force Mu'âwiyah ؓ to take Bai'ah. So, he considered it necessary to make Kufah his capital. The Kufis happened to be the main strength of Ali's army. There was another



reason behind making Kufah the capital and military center of Islam because Kufah was nearer to Damascus than Al-Madinah. Kufah spread its shadow of influence up to the Persian provinces. Umar Fâruq ؓ had consolidated Al-Madinah as the power center of Islam, which was necessary at that time. But events suffered drastic changes during the days of Ali ؓ.




Before Ali ؓ, the Caliphs of Islam ruled from Al-Madinah, the center of power. They had no role to play as a commander of the Islamic forces. But Ali ؓ under the pressure of circumstances, had to lead his army to battle and assumed the role of the commander. And this was one factor that cast injurious effects on his administration.





Something worthy of notice here is that a section of the rioters and murderers of Uthmân ؓ had joined Abdullah bin Saba as a result of his great efforts, and therefore, came to be called the party of Abdullah bin Saba. A large number of Muslims had become his followers out of their gullibility but the number of real followers of Abdullah bin Saba was very small. These few persons were clever enough to mislead large numbers of people into trusting the sincerity of their scheme. Thus, they would often change their tools according to their needs and circumstances. That was the reason why this party led the rioters to do away with Uthmân ؓ and his caliphate and a greater number of them took part in the battle of Jamal.







But when they turned against Ali ؓ, many among the rioters severed their relations with the party. They rather sided with Ali ؓ and played a prominent role in strengthening his hand and thus gaining power and influence in his court. When Ali ؓ settled in Kufah, they became closer and more influential, which in turn made Mu'âwiyah's position stronger. It was because of this that those in favor of taking Qisâs (retaliation) for Uthmân's blood, sided with Mu'âwiyah ؓ in spite of the superiority of Ali ؓ, which they all knew.

## **Egypt and Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ**

About the time of Uthmân's martyrdom, Muhammad bin Abu Hudaifah ؓ had captured the governorship of Egypt by dismissing Abdullah bin Sa'd ؓ. However, with his becoming Caliph, Ali ؓ sent Qais bin

Sa'd  to Egypt as governor of the province. The new governor reached Egypt along with only seven persons and dismissed Muhammad bin Abu Hudalfah  and took charge as governor of Egypt. In Egypt also there were men like Yazid bin Al-Hārith and Maslamah bin Mukhallad who declined to take *Bai'ah* on the plea of awaiting the settlement of the issue of *Qisās* (retaliation). However, they promised silence until a solution was found. Qais bin Sa'd  gained popularity and respect in Egypt by virtue of his character and abilities.

When the battle of Jamal ended and Ali  settled in Kufah, Mu'āwiyah  anticipated a two-pronged attack on Syria one by Iraq from the east and one by Egypt from the south. However, Mu'āwiyah  was not so weak as to be swallowed up easily. He had reason to grow strong with the passage of time and with the caliphate facing troubles, he placed his own house in peace and order. Every day he made himself stronger and he was a power formidable enough to answer back any challenge. He arranged a daily display of the bloodstained garments of Uthmān  and the fingers of Uthmān's wife on the pulpit of the grand mosque of Damascus. People in large numbers cried aloud and mourned the victims of these atrocities. The people would never leave the mosque until they had vowed to avenge the assassination.

Furthermore, a strong Syria was necessary, for it was constantly under the threat of Roman attack. Mu'āwiyah  was never found lacking in inviting and honoring men of letters and arms from all over Arabia. He utilized every opportunity available to claim his right to retaliate for the martyrdom of Uthmān . He had spent the whole year since the assassination, in making total preparations for the anticipated danger, while Ali  remained surrounded by threats, challenges, troubles and fighting throughout this period. Even though the entire world of Islam barring Syria was under the rule of Ali , he never enjoyed such a power and influence as was wielded by Umar Fāruq . His loyalists were found everywhere in Hijāz, Yemen, Iraq, Egypt, and Persia but his opponents also had their say. Thus Ali  was not in a position to get the full support and military aid from any province under his direct rule.

The state of affairs with Mu'āwiyah ؓ was quite different. He had the support of the Syrians as a whole. As a matter of war strategy, he wanted to remove the threat from the Egyptian side because he dreaded the power and abilities of Qais bin Sa'd ؓ. Fortunately for him, he soon got an opportunity to eliminate the threat from Egypt. Mu'āwiyah ؓ wrote Qais bin Sa'd ؓ to help him for he simply wanted to avenge the blood of Uthmān ؓ. Qais firmly wrote him back that Ali ؓ had no hand in the assassination of Uthmān ؓ and so he should take *Bai'ah* at Ali's hand like the others, instead of opposing him.

In the meantime Qais bin Sa'd ؓ wrote a letter to Ali ؓ advising him not to put pressure on the people who were keeping silence on the subject of *Bai'ah*. Abdullah bin Ja'far ؓ suggested to Ali ؓ to write Sa'd ؓ not to overlook the problem or to leave the people unpunished if they refused to take *Bai'ah*. Ali ؓ wrote him accordingly. But instead of carrying out the orders of the Caliph, he wrote him again suggesting him to leave them as they were, for any pressure would make them rise against the caliphate and join the opponents as well.

As the letter reached Kufah, the emissaries of Ali ؓ convinced him that Qais bin Sa'd ؓ must have joined hands with Mu'āwiyah ؓ. Ali ؓ was reluctant to accept their idea and he considered Sa'd ؓ qualified and necessary for Egypt. When Mu'āwiyah ؓ came to know of these suspicions, he began to praise Qais bin Sa'd ؓ openly in his court. He also commenced telling the people that Qais ؓ had come to his side and had begun to support those demanding *Qisās* (retaliation). The spies of Ali ؓ gave him the whole account of the new developments, with the result that he deposed Qais bin Sa'd ؓ and replaced him with Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ. Qais ؓ reached Al-Madinah shocked and frustrated.

Al-Madinah was without a ruler after Ali ؓ had shifted to Kufah. Elements supporting and opposing Ali ؓ could be found there. When Qais bin Sa'd ؓ reached Al-Madinah, Mu'āwiyah ؓ sent Marwān bin Al-Hakam to persuade him to go to Damascus. Qais ؓ declined the offer and when he was roughly treated, he left for Kufah. When he related the whole event to Ali ؓ, the latter expressed satisfaction and kept him in his company. Hearing this, Mu'āwiyah

✽ wrote to Marwān: "Had you reinforced Ali with an army of one hundred thousand fighters, it would have been better than Qais joining Ali."

Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ✽, with the assumption of power, announced to the people to either take *Bai'ah* or leave the country. They requested him not to be in a rush and give them a few days to think and decide. He flatly refused any respite, with the result they sprang into action to safeguard themselves against the eventuality of him trying to punish them. The result was that Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ✽ remained entangled with them even after the end of the battle of Siffin.

### **Amr bin Al-Ās ✽ was with Mu'āwiyah ✽**

Amr bin Al-Ās ✽ had conquered Egypt. While the rioters entered Al-Madinah and surrounded the house of Uthmān ✽, he decided to leave Al-Madinah. He took with him his sons, Abdullah and Muhammad and settled in Bait Al-Maqdis (Jerusalem). Being there, he remained in contact with all the developments that took place following the martyrdom of Uthmān ✽. When he was informed that the danger of a large-scale bloody battle hung over the head of the Muslim *Ummah*, Amr bin Al-Ās ✽ held consultations with his sons about his role as a peacemaker.

Before the battle of Jamal, four persons had a claim to the caliphate. One was Ali ✽ who had already become the Caliph and a large number of people had taken *Bai'ah* at his hands, and the second and the third being Talhah and Zubair who were killed during the battle of the Jamal. Now the fourth one left in the field to stake his claim to the caliphate was Mu'āwiyah ✽. He had refused to take *Bai'ah* on the claim that Ali ✽ was made Caliph with the support of the rioters and the killers of Uthmān ✽ who were also being patronized by Ali ✽.

On the other hand, Ali ✽ claimed that in regard to the services to Islam, proximity and relationship with the Prophet ﷺ and in being one of the first to embrace Islam, Mu'āwiyah ✽ was not on par with him. Both of them had reasons for their claims. In such a confusing situation Amr bin Al-Ās ✽ thought it quite unwise to keep aloof. He

decided to play his role in helping the two hostile forces reach a consensus.

He arrived in Damascus and Mu'āwiyah ؓ welcomed him. He made no delay in telling Mu'āwiyah ؓ that he was within his rights to avenge the blood of Uthmān ؓ. At first Mu'āwiyah ؓ practiced caution but later he became satisfied towards him and made Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ a member of his government.

Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ then advanced his suggestion to Mu'āwiyah ؓ that consecutive display of the bloodstained garments and slashed fingers would reduce the fervor of the people. So it should be put on display on special occasions. Mu'āwiyah ؓ liked this suggestion and so the daily mourning and crying came to an end. Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ then let Mu'āwiyah ؓ know that the battle of Jamal had very much eroded Ali's military power and a large number of his troops had already perished. In addition, the wise and influential people of Basrah had lost their lives in the strife and only the weak masses had pledged their allegiance to Ali ؓ and they would be of little help to him. Furthermore, the fighting machinery of Ali ؓ had been reduced to disorder because of the large-scale killing of the Muslims on both sides had dampened their spirits. The appraisal of Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ was not unreasonable, even the Saba sect knew it well.

### **Preparations for the fighting in Siffin**

With his arrival in Kufah, Ali ؓ was determined to make preparations against Syria. Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ also left Basrah with his army. Hearing this, Ali ؓ too marched to Nukhailah putting Abu Mas'ud Ansāri ؓ in his place. Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ joined Ali there. Ali ؓ then dispatched Ziyād bin Nadr Hārithi at the head of an eight thousand strong vanguard. He also sent Shuraih bin Hāni at the back of Ziyād with four thousand fighters. Ali ؓ came to Madā'in and sent Ma'qal bin Qais with a detachment of three thousand after putting Sa'd bin Mas'ud Thaqafi in charge of Madā'in. From Madā'in, Ali ؓ reached Raqqah and crossed the Euphrates to meet the joint forces of Shuraih, Ma'qal and others. When Mu'āwiyah ؓ came to know that Ali ؓ was marching on Syria, he hurriedly sent Abul-A'war Sulami at the head of a squadron in the form of vanguard. Ali ؓ sent

Ziyād and Shuraih ahead of the vanguard. When these generals entered the Syrian borders, they were informed that Abul-A'war was heading a detachment against them. They informed Ali ؑ of the situation who sent Ashtar to take charge of the forces and to put Ziyād and Shuraih to the right and left wings. He also instructed not to attack the Syrians unless they were attacked by them.

Ashtar acted accordingly. Abul-A'war camped in front of them. Both camps passed the whole day in silence. By the evening, Abul-A'war launched an attack on his opponents but they separated after a brief encounter. The next day, Abul-A'war stepped forward and was faced by Hāshim bin Utbah and they kept fighting until noon. Each of them was retreating to his camp when Ashtar launched a sudden attack. Abul-A'war also responded with his men. The fighting continued until the darkness of night intervened to stop it.

The next day, Ali ؑ appeared on the scene. News also came about Mu'āwiyah's march towards the battlefield. Ali ؑ stopped fighting and ordered Ashtar to capture the banks of Euphrates for water. But Ashtar found to his disappointment that Mu'āwiyah ؑ had already captured the water of the Euphrates. When Ali ؑ became aware of this, he sent Sa'sa'ah bin Suhān with a letter addressed to Mu'āwiyah ؑ which, contained: "We would not have started this fight with you until we heard your grievances and called you to the right path. However, your men preferred to launch an attack on our troops and started the aggression. Now we think it fit to first invite you to the straight path before meeting you in the battlefield. It is quite unfortunate that you have initiated your war activities by capturing the water resources and stopped the supply of water to us, with the result that our troops are under the stress of thirst. It is better to ask your men not to prevent us from fetching water until the controversies are peacefully resolved. However, if you want to fight over the water instead of attaining the main goals, we are ready for that as well."

Mu'āwiyah ؑ called an emergency meeting and placed the demand before his advisers. Abdullah bin Sa'd, the former governor of Egypt and Walid bin Uqbah spoke against lifting the ban on water so that they should be left to die without water as they had done with

Uthmān bin Affān ؓ. But Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ said pleading against them, "Stopping the supply of water is not reasonable because many from your own camp may not bear the tragic deaths of Ali's men without water and they might join Ali's camp to fight against you declaring you unfair and stone-hearted." Mu'āwiyah ؓ announced not to block the supply of water and the situation that was heading towards an armed conflict was defused. [The dispute over the water seems to be incorrect. Euphrates is not a tank or pool that any party can get hold of it. It is a river thousands of miles in length and each party could have taken water from its side.]

Following this, both sides kept silent for two days. Parties from Hijāz, Yemen, Hamadān and other parts of Arabia and Persia joined Ali's army to make it swell to ninety thousand, while Mu'āwiyah ؓ was in command of eighty thousand troops. [Historians differ on the number of troops. Some have mentioned the same and others have mentioned differently.]

Ali ؓ had given the command of the horsemen of Kufah to Ashtar and those of Basrah to Sahl bin Hunaif, the infantry of Kufah was commanded by Ammār bin Yāsir and those of Basrah by Qais bin Sa'd bin Ubādah ؓ, while Hashim bin Utbah was made the standard-bearer. Other clans and parties from various provinces were put under the command of their respective chiefs. In the army of Mu'āwiyah ؓ, Dhil-Kala' Himyari was put on the right wing, Habib bin Maslamah on the left and the vanguard was handed over to Abul-A'war Sulami. The cavalry of Damascus was put under the command of Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ while the infantry was headed by Muslim bin Uqbah. Other small columns were given to the commanding officers like Abdur-Rahmān bin Khālid, Ubaidullah bin Umar and Bashir bin Mālik Kindi and others.

On the third day, Ali ؓ broke his silence and sent Bashir bin Amr bin Mihsan Ansāri, Saeed bin Qais and Shabath bin Rib'i Tamimi to convince Mu'āwiyah ؓ to accept obedience and to take *Bai'ah* of Ali ؓ. Bashir bin Amr ؓ said to Mu'āwiyah, "O Mu'āwiyah, refrain from creating any rift in the Muslim ranks and avoid bloodshed." Mu'āwiyah ؓ retorted, "Have you counseled this to your friend Ali?" Bashir replied, "He is among the first believers in Islam and a



very close relative of the Prophet ﷺ and has, therefore, more right to caliphate than all others." Mu'āwiyah ؓ said, "It is not at all possible for us to give up our demand for avenging the blood of Uthmān." Thereupon Shabath bin Rib'i said, "O Mu'āwiyah, we know very well your purpose behind the demand for Qisās. You delayed help to Uthmān so that he would be martyred giving you an opportunity to stake your claim to the caliphate on the pretext of avenging Uthmān's blood. O Mu'āwiyah, avoid any conflict with Ali and see reason." This led to hot exchanges with Mu'āwiyah ؓ and the deputation proved fruitless.

### **First Stage of the Battle of Siffin**

When peace talks failed, they came to a clash. But the zeal and fervor they used to experience in fighting against the disbelievers was absent because of the ties of friendship and relationship between the opposing sides. Men from both sides generally wanted to avert the scourge of battle. Since circumstances had led both the parties to dictate terms unacceptable to the other side and they couldn't compromise in achieving their purpose, fighting became inevitable. However, they tried to avoid all-out fighting. They started with a duel that lingered on for a few days. A little later the rage for fighting increased and with it, the chiefs of small parties began to face each other one by one. Thus the duel changed into clashes between small parties, while the armies on both sides remained silent spectators. This exercise continued for about a month.

This period may be considered as the first stage of the battle of Siffin. With the beginning of the month of Muharram, both the parties had a one-month respite and fighting was totally stopped. The contacts and peace talks were started again. Men on both sides desired success for the peace talks and had an aversion to war except the Saba party who had vested interests. Success of the peace talks could be virtually a deathblow to their nefarious plans. Thus they were leaving no stone unturned in keeping both sides at odds. They were doing all within their power to aggravate the situation.

Ali ؓ was in a fix. He could neither quit the caliphate nor punish the rioters and assassins of Uthmān ؓ. To punish a mighty commander



like Mālik Ashtar, a governor like Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؓ and a respected Companion like Ammār bin Yāsir ؓ meant antagonizing the Egyptian and Kufi forces. Moreover, the role of rioters in the assassination of Uthmān ؓ could not be exactly determined for lack of definite witnesses. On the other hand, Ali ؓ was more deserving of the caliphate by all standards.

Mu'āwiyah ؓ considered himself equally important by virtue of being a distinguished personality of Makkah, the son of Abu Sufyān ؓ, commander-in-chief of the huge Makkan armies in the battles of Uhud and Ahzāb (Confederates), commander who achieved great victories against the Romans since the beginning of the caliphate, great administer who governed Egypt very efficiently, brother of a wife of the Prophet ﷺ and a scribe of the Revelation. He was bound with Uthmān ؓ in ancestral ties and he therefore, considered himself within his rights to avenge the blood of Uthmān ؓ. It was to him highly improper and unreasonable to evade Qisās (retaliation) for the murder of such a grave nature by merely declaring it doubtful.

The explanation given by Ali ؓ was neither understandable nor worth understanding to him. The revolt of Talhah ؓ and Zubair ؓ, the many Companions in Al-Madinah who declined to take Bai'ah and the support received from Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ had fortified his conviction and determination in his stand. The leadership on both sides would be forced to restore peace and amity if advisors, supporters and commanding officers played their roles positively. The Muharram cessation of fighting was a golden opportunity to implement the peace proposal but the Saba party was active enough to sabotage the peace mission and they were successful in their treachery.

### **Another Peace Effort during Muharram**




At some date in Muharram of 37 AH, Ali ؓ sent a peace commission to Mu'āwiyah ؓ to initiate talks. It consisted of Adi bin Hātim, Zaid bin Qais, Ziyād bin Khasafah, and Shabath bin Rib'i. Initiating the peace talks, Adi bin Hātim ؓ said after praising Allāh the Almighty, "O Mu'āwiyah, your recognition and obedience to Ali will bring peace to Muslims as a whole. None has rejected the call to take Bai'ah


except you and your friends. If you still insist on deviating from the path of righteousness, I am afraid, you will invite the same ordeal, the people of Jamal faced." Cutting short the speech of Adi, Mu'āwiyah ؓ said, "O Adi! Have you come here on peace mission or on a war mission? Don't you know I am the grandson of Harb, I fear not fighting? Since you too are among the assassins of Uthmān, Allāh the Almighty will put you to death."

Following this, Yazid bin Qais said, "We have come as emissaries and so it is not our mission to counsel you. Nevertheless, we should make an all-out endeavor to bring peace and unity to the Muslims and remove disunity." Saying this, he began to state the excellence of Ali ؓ and his worthiness of being the Caliph of Islam. In reply to his statement, Mu'āwiyah ؓ said, "How do you call me to join a party when I, too, have a party of Muslims with me. I don't consider your friend worthy of the caliphate for he assassinated our Caliph and sheltered the assassins. Peace may be established only when the assassins of Uthmān are handed over to us." Interrupting the statement, Shabath bin Rib'i spoke out, "O Mu'āwiyah! Will you kill Ammār bin Yāsir?" Mu'āwiyah ؓ replied, "What can prevent me from killing Ammār? I shall surely kill him as a retaliation for the blood of Uthmān's slave." Shabath bin Rib'i firmly said, "You will never be able to kill him unless you meet your death." Mu'āwiyah ؓ answered back, "You are to meet your death first." After such hot exchanges, the commission left without any success.


### **The Speech of Ali ؓ**


Mu'āwiyah ؓ then sent a similar commission to Ali ؓ, which included Habib bin Maslamah, Shurahbil bin As-Samt, and Ma'n bin Yazid. Initiating the talk, Habib bin Maslamah said to Ali ؓ, "Uthmān was the rightful Caliph. He managed the affairs under the guidelines set by the Book and the *Sunnah*. But his life appeared detestable and so you killed him; if not, you should hand over the assassins to us and relinquish the caliphate at once giving an opportunity to the people at large to choose a caliph according to their will." Hearing this, Ali ؓ grew furious and chided him saying, "You should keep quite. You have no right to make such a statement

concerning the caliphate." Thereupon Habib bin Maslamah retorted, "You are to see me in a state which will make you become unpleasant," meaning thereby, the sword will decide the matter. Ali  angrily said, "Go and do whatever you like." Saying this, Ali  got up and spoke after praising Allāh the Almighty, describing the purpose behind the advent of the Prophet  and eulogizing the caliphate of the two former Righteous Caliphs: "I found them performing their duties correctly. So, I held myself back from meddling in their affairs. They then chose Uthmān as Caliph. His style of functioning caused dissatisfaction among the people and they killed him. Following that, they requested me to accept their *Bai'ah*, which I granted. But Talhah and Zubair violated their pledge and Mu'āwiyah opposed me, even though he is not among the first to embrace Islam like me. I wonder at your obedience to him although I call you towards the Book and the *Sunnah* and the Pillars of Faith."

Hearing his speech, Shurahbil bin As-Samt said, "Do you not bear witness that Uthmān was oppressively martyred?" Ali  replied, "I hold Uthmān neither oppressed nor oppressor." Having heard this, they got up saying, "We rather abhor one who evades holding Uthmān a victim. It is all the same for such people whether they are asked to see wisdom or not." No considerable peace efforts were made after the failure of that mission.

### **One Week of the Battle of Siffin**

At the end of Muharram 37 AH, Ali  issued orders to his army that a decisive battle would begin from the first of the month of Safar. Along with this he added that the fleeing opponents will neither be chased nor killed; nor the goods of the wounded be taken, nor their dead bodies mutilated, nor the women be put to excesses even if they call bad names. Such orders were also issued from the other side. Thus the battle broke out on the first morning in Safar. The people of Kufah advanced under the command of Ashtar, and the Syrians headed by Habib bin Maslamah, faced one another. The battle continued until evening but remained indecisive.

The next day, Hāshim bin Utbah came out at the head of a column of cavalry and infantry from the side of Ali , and Abul-A'war Sulami

on behalf of Mu'āwiyah ؓ. But the daylong bloody battle produced no results. On the third day, Ammār bin Yāsir ؓ from Ali's camp, and Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ from that of Mu'āwiyah ؓ faced each other. It was more severe an encounter in comparison to previous ones. Ammār bin Yāsir ؓ launched such a fierce attack that Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ had to fall back. But the day, however, went without any result.

On the fourth day, Ubaidullah bin Umar ؓ led the column from Mu'āwiyah's side and Muhammad bin Al-Hanafiyah, the son of Ali ؓ from Ali's side but the battle remained indecisive. By the evening, Ubaidullah bin Umar ؓ challenged Muhammad bin Al-Hanafiyah to a duel, which he accepted, but Ali ؓ rushed to the spot and brought Muhammad back, Ubaidullah ؓ also went back to his camp.

The fifth day saw Walid bin Uqbah coming out from Ali's camp, and Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ from Mu'āwiyah's side, and fought the whole day, while the sixth day, Mālik Ashtar and Habib bin Maslamah came out again for a decisive battle but it was an exercise in futility. On the seventh day, Ali ؓ and Mu'āwiyah ؓ led their armies against one another but no body could win the day.

This weeklong battle failed to produce any result because in number and art of warfare and valor both sides were almost equal. However, the enemy camp of Saba rejoiced at the bloodbath of the Muslims on both sides. Although the week proved ill-fated, more ominous days were to come.

### **The Last Two Days of the Battle of Siffin**

After a week of severe battles, both the armies got ready for a decisive battle. On Safar 8, 37 AH, Ali ؓ launched his assault on Mu'āwiyah's army. Ali ؓ occupied a place in the center where the notables of Kufah, Basrah, Al-Madinah and from Banu Khuzā'ah and Banu Kinānah had their presence. Abdullah bin Budail bin Warqa Khuzā'i was put on the right wing and Abdullah on the left. Every clan had its fixed place, separate standard and leading officer. Ammār bin Yāsir ؓ had been given charge of the people singing martial songs and reciting the Qur'ān. Qais bin Sa'd ؓ and Abdullah bin Yazid were also put on the same job.

Mu'āwiyah ؓ, on the other hand, took *Bai'ah* (pledges) for death in his camp. He gave the right wing of his army to Ubaidullah bin Umar ؓ and left to Habib bin Maslamah. Ali's right wing first made the advance and Abdullah bin Budail Khuzā'i attacked the left wing of Mu'āwiyah's army led by Habib bin Maslamah. Under the hard pressure of Abdullah, Habib's cavalry was forced to retreat until it reached the spot where, Mu'āwiyah ؓ with his men, had taken the pledge for death. With an eye on the setback of his right wing, Mu'āwiyah ؓ ordered his men to attack. The attack was so massive that Abdullah bin Budail was left with only two hundred fifty men while all others fled to take shelter behind Ali ؓ. In view of the ordeal suffered by his right wing, Ali ؓ sent Sahl bin Hunaid as the commanding officer of the Madinites to reinforce and protect Abdullah bin Budail. But in a short while Budail succumbed to death along with his party.

The left wing also tasted defeat at the hands of the Syrian force. None but the Rabi'ah tribe fought with courage and firmness. All others fled the battlefield. With this scenario, Ali ؓ sent his sons, Hasan, Husain and Muhammad to reinforce the Rabi'ah tribe so that they were not routed. He then asked Ashtar to call the right wing and put them to shame or force them to avoid escape. Ali ؓ himself made an advance towards the left wing and began to measure his sword with the enemy. The presence of Ali ؓ produced courage in the Rabi'ah tribe whose charge became more forceful.

When Ahmar, the slave of Abu Sufyān ؓ saw Ali ؓ in action, he made an attempt on his life but Ali's slave Kaisān engaged him but was killed in the encounter. With the killing of his slave, Ali ؓ launched an assault on Ahmar and in a state of utmost fury, he lifted him up and knocked him down so violently that his both hands turned useless. The Syrian army attempted an attack on Ali ؓ but the people of Rabi'ah stood in the way.

Ashtar, on the other hand, upheld the right wing. Thus the chance of success, which was, at one stage, slipping out of the hands of Ali ؓ returned to an equilibrium. Both sides were fighting with almost equal valor and firmness. By afternoon, Mālik Ashtar pushed back the left wing of Mu'āwiyah ؓ. But the cavalry of Mu'āwiyah ؓ, which had

taken an oath for death, came to the rescue of the retreating column and pushed Ali's right wing far behind. Now Abdullah bin Husain, the comrade of Ammâr bin Yâsir ؓ, came forward with a martial song on his lips while Uqbah bin Hadid Numairi came from the opposite camp and was killed. In the wake of his death the Syrian army made a massive attack which was sustained by Ali's troops with firmness despite an initial setback. Ali ؓ came with a column on the left wing to the rescue of the right wing and a pitched battle was fought. Dhul-Kala' Himyari and Ubaidullah bin Umar ؓ launched such a forceful attack on the left wing of Ali's troops that even the Rabi'ah tribe could not withstand the onslaught, and a large number of fighters lost their lives. Following this disaster of the left wing, Abdul-Qais stepped forward and lent support to the Rabi'ah tribe and checked the advancement of the Syrian troops. Timely reinforcements revived the left wing and both Dhul-Kala' Himyari and Ubaidullah bin Umar ؓ were killed.

In short, the right and left wings of both the armies kept fighting from morning to evening, but the hearts of both sides were steady. At last, Ammâr bin Yâsir ؓ moved through the army of Ali ؓ calling out, "Whoever has a desire to gain the Pleasure of Allâh the Almighty, and has no wish to go back to his possessions and children should join me." A large number of the army responded to his call and vowed to fight to the finish. At the end, he came to Hâshim bin Utbah, the standard-bearer of Ali ؓ, he took him with his dedicated men and launched such a massive attack that Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ could barely withstand it with much difficulty.

At last, Ammâr ؓ was killed. The news of Ammâr bin Yâsir's death saddened Ali ؓ. The Syrian Army too was aroused to fight forcefully. The battle air was filled with the rattling sound of swords and spears and loud voices of martial songs. This was the night of Friday, it is known as *Lailat-ul-Harir*. Owais Qarni was also martyred in the same night. Ali ؓ was running through the battleground with lighting speed directing the right wing then guiding the left and at times crossing swords with the Syrians. Abdullah bin Abbâs ؓ was heading the left wing while Ashtar was in charge of the right one. Mu'âwiyah ؓ was also fighting with Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ and the other chiefs. The night passed in fierce fighting but with no outcome.

Ali ﷺ once, piercing through the Syrian army, reached very near to Mu'āwiyah ﷺ at the head of twelve thousand troops and threw a challenge for a duel, for it was to him better than the large-scale massacre on both sides. Hearing the call, Amr bin Al-Ās ﷺ told Mu'āwiyah ﷺ that the proposal of Ali ﷺ was reasonable and he should go for a duel. "Why do you not like this for yourself? Don't you know that the one who goes to fight with Ali doesn't come back alive?" Mu'āwiyah ﷺ uttered bitterly. He then added with a laugh, "You, perhaps, want me to go for a duel so that I am killed and you become the ruler of Syria." Ali ﷺ received no reply and came back with no result.

Thirty hours of continuous fighting took a toll of seventy thousand Muslim fighters from both sides. Such a clash of Muslim forces was a terrible catastrophe. Seventy thousand valiant Muslim fighters could have conquered the whole world. With the decline of noon, Mālik Ashtar handed over the charge of his contingent to Haiyān bin Haudhah and took a squadron of cavalry and stirred the soldiers to fight to the finish. Although the battle was equally balanced, more than half of the troops on the Syrian side had lost their lives. Now, Mu'āwiyah ﷺ had only thirty-five thousand fighters out of eighty thousand on his side. Ali ﷺ had, on the other hand, lost twenty to twenty-five thousand soldiers while about sixty thousand fighters were still ready to fight under his command. Ali ﷺ had with him double the number of fighters as Mu'āwiyah's troops. [This analysis seems to be unrealistic, Tabari and Baihaqi mention the number of martyrs on the Ali's side to be double of Mu'āwiyah's. Forty thousand men from Ali's army and twenty thousand from Mu'āwiyah's army were killed. (*Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah*, 7/244).]

In such a state, Ali ﷺ had an opportunity to separate a portion of his troops to launch a heavy assault on the Syrians while keeping them engaged from the other side. Mālik Ashtar made a tremendous attack with his cavalry and reached the heart of enemy pushing and smashing the Syrians. When Ali ﷺ saw his cavalry making inroads into enemy's heart, he started sending reinforcements after reinforcements to strengthen the attack. His strategy worked. The standard-bearer of the Syrian Army was killed by Ashtar.



Now the scene of carnage was near the camp of Mu'āwiyah and Amr bin Al-Ās. Ashtar's dashing charge broke the right and left wings and both sides shrank into fighting in a small circle leaving no chance for the opponents to enforce their strength. Large-scale killings including that of the standard-bearer had terribly frightened the Mu'āwiyah camp whose defeat was now imminent. In such a crucial and chaotic stage, Amr bin Al-Ās salvaged their position with a novel device.

### **The End of the Battle**

At this juncture, Amr bin Al-Ās counselled Mu'āwiyah to order his men to raise the Qur'ān high on the point of their spears crying aloud: "Between you and us is the Book of Allāh." The Syrians began to say that they bowed down to the verdict of the Qur'ān. Someone was heard saying, "Muslims! we were fighting in the way of Faith; come on and obey the judgement of the Qur'ān and make peace." Some others called out, "O people! Who will fight the Romans if the Syrians are destroyed, and who will face the eastern invaders if the Iraqis are ruined?" When Ali's men witnessed the Qur'ān raised with the spears, they stopped fighting at once. Abdullah bin Abbās remarked at the new developments: "It was fighting until now but this is the beginning of cheating." Ali tried to make his men understand not to fall short of carrying their mission to its logical end, for the victory was not far away. However, as the people had been completely exhausted by continuous fighting, they found this an opportunity from providence to stop fighting without delay. Moreover, the fierce and bloody fighting that was still going hid the fact that victory was within reach. The nearness of victory was visible only to Ali and his generals and officers and had not yet come into the view of the fighters' sight so they were not in favor of fighting further.

Ashtar was sure of his victory and was in full command of the situation, it seemed unreasonable and illogical to call him back from the battlefield. It was tantamount to undoing of all his efforts and sacrifices. But fighters including the hypocrites of Saba party surrounded Ali on all sides to stop fighting and to recall Ashtar.



Ali ؑ was still undecided when a strong threat of internal fighting changed his mind and he called Ashtar back. They threatened him with the consequences of Uthmān ؑ. In response to the menacing situation, Ali ؑ was compelled to issue emergency orders for Ashtar to come back at once as the door of a series of problems was now thrown open. Ashtar called off the fighting, but very reluctantly.

[These details about the last part of the Siffin Battle, especially the complete submission of Syrian army, and the raising of the Qur'ān on the spears, are false fabrications of Shi'ite narrations while the actual events testify differently:

The Prophet ﷺ had directed Ali ؑ and Fātimah ؑ to mention *Subhān Allāh*, *Al-hamdu lillah* and *Allāhu Akbar*, thirty-three times each while going to sleep. The Prophet ﷺ told this act better than getting a slave. Ali ؑ told that he never discontinued this act. When he was asked whether he continued this act even on the night of Siffin, he replied that even that night he performed it. (*Bukhari* 5362, *Fath Al-Bari* 9/506). Some other narrations also strengthen this fact. As these mentions are recited at the time of sleep, it is proved that the fight was stopped during this night of Siffin and people got the chance of taking a rest or sleep.

In *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, the Book of Commentary (*Sūrat Al-Fath*), there is a narration about this event. The first part of it is not so clear, but in *Musnad Ahmad* (3/485) and *An-Nasa'i* (2/306), this event is well-described with the reference of *Sahih Al-Bukhari*. According to the wording of *Musnad Ahmad*, Habib bin Abu Thâbit said: I went to Abu Wa'il, he said, "We were in Siffin, when the fight with Syrians grew fierce, Amr said to Mu'āwiyah: 'Send the Scripture (Qur'ān) to Ali, and call him towards the Book of Allāh, he cannot refuse it to you.' So, a man took Qur'ān to him and said, 'Between us and you, this is the Book of Allāh.' Then he recited the Verse which accuses the people of the Scriptures: 'Have you not seen those who have been given a portion of the Scripture? They are being invited to the Book of Allāh to settle their dispute, then a party of them turns away, and they are averse.' (V.3:23). On this Ali said, 'We are more entitled to it than you.' (Thus he at once agreed to make the Book of Allāh their judge, and stopped fighting. Upon this) some distinguished persons said (who became Khawārij later): 'O Chief

of the believers, what we have to see of them now? Should we not go with our swords until Allāh decides between us?' On this Sahl bin Hunaif said: 'O people, blame yourselves. We have seen ourselves on the day of Hudaibiyah. If there was a possibility of fight, we would have fought.' (A narration of *Bukhari* says: 'If I could have resisted the order of the Prophet ﷺ, I would have done that.' It means that the order of Allāh and His Messenger is to be obeyed, and there is no other way. Here also the Book of Allāh is accepted as judge, so no other way out)."

Many points are known from this narration:

1. The proposal presented by Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ to make the Qur'ân judge was not to cheat the Iraqi people but to stop Muslims indulging in more bloodshed and destroying themselves.
2. This proposal was not presented in the way that the people while fighting, unexpectedly produced Qur'ân from somewhere in their clothes, and raised them on the spears. The Muslim fighters don't keep the Qur'ân with them in this way. Actually a man took the Qur'ân to Ali ؓ. Same is the wording of *Musnad Ahmad* and *An-Nasa'i*. It is stated in *Daraqutni* also that a man took the Qur'ân to Ali ؓ. So, this was done in the most suitable diplomatic way.
3. Ali ؓ had not termed the proposal as cheating or fraud, neither his army had forced him to accept the proposal. But Ali ؓ, on his own, had accepted it as soon as it was brought forward. He not only accepted it without any delay or any argument but he praised it to be the suitable and timely proposal, and told that he was more entitled to act upon it than Mu'âwiyah ؓ.
4. It was also not the case that the army, especially the learned people had forced Ali ؓ to accept the proposal, as is mentioned in general narratives, but contrary to it, the most distinguished persons of his army came to him with swords in their hands and asked his permission to fight. But Ali ؓ didn't give them permission. Even Sahl bin Hunaif, the right hand of Ali ؓ, explained the army that the Book of Allāh has been made judge in this matter, so nothing else can be adopted nor any opinion can be considered. He gave the reference of the Hudaibiyah Treaty in this regard.

5. When this narration of *Musnad Ahmad* and *An-Nasa'i* is considered with its full context, it becomes clear enough that at the time of sending the proposal, no fighting was going on. But both the parties were ready to begin the fight. It means that the fighting had stopped the night before, and after the day appeared, both parties were making their preparations that the proposal was made by Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ to Mu'awiyah ؓ to save the Muslims from further destruction. Mu'awiyah ؓ sent a man to Ali ؓ with the proposal and Ali ؓ at once accepted it to end the fight. He had said before that he would not fight until there is a justification, and now there was no justice greater than the Book of Allâh. The second party had itself asked to accept it, and so there was no room for further fighting.]

Ali ؓ informed Ashtar of the reason for his recall. Expressing deep grief, Ashtar said addressing the people, "O the people of Iraq, you were entrapped by delusions when you were about to overpower the Syrians." But the people were so much overwhelmed with fervor against fighting that they made an attempt to attack Ashtar but held back when Ali ؓ intervened. After a while Ash'ath bin Qais stepped forward and submitted to Ali ؓ, "As now the battle has come to a halt and the people have accepted the Qur'ân as an arbitrator, will you permit me to contact Mu'awiyah to know his mind." Ali ؓ acceded to his request. He went to Mu'awiyah ؓ and said, "What was your intention behind raising the Qur'ân upon the spears?" He said in reply, "Both of us should turn to the Command of Allâh and His Messenger. Now two persons, one from each side, should be appointed to examine and decide the matter under oath and both sides should follow their decision."

Having heard this, Ash'ath came back and related to Ali ؓ what he had heard. The people around Ali ؓ hurried to accept the proposal. When Mu'awiyah ؓ was asked about the man to represent his side, he named Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ. Ali ؓ named Abdullah bin Abbâs ؓ. But the proposal was rejected on the plea that Abdullah was his relative. They demanded a neutral person. When Ali ؓ left the matter to them, they named Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ. But Ali ؓ expressed his reluctance declaring him unauthentic. [This attitude related to Ali ؓ is absolutely baseless.]

However, he yielded to their constant insistence and pressure. The deliberations were still on when Amr bin Al-Âs ﷺ turned up to make out the declaration under oath.

### Making out the Documentation and the Return

Amr bin Al-Âs ﷺ requested Ali ﷺ to allow him to take down the document. Ali ﷺ had him to write down the following:

"This declaration between Ali bin Abu Tâlib and Mu'âwiyah bin Abu Sufyân declares that Ali bin Abu Tâlib has appointed an arbitrator on behalf of the people of Kufah and all those supporting him and, similarly, Mu'âwiyah bin Sufyân has appointed an arbitrator on behalf of all who follow him. We, holding the Book of Allâh the Almighty and His Order as judge, declare that both of us will follow nothing but the injunctions of Allâh and His Book. We abide by the rules of the Qur'ân from *Al-Hamd* to *Al-Nâs* and declare to follow what is permitted and hold back from what is forbidden. The two appointed arbitrators are Abu Musa Abdullah bin Qais Ash'ari and Amr bin Al-Âs. They will give a decision according to the dictates of the Qur'ân otherwise in accordance with the *Sunnah* if the Qur'ân is found silent over the issue."

Following this, the arbitrators Abu Musa Ash'ari ﷺ and Amr bin Al-Âs ﷺ were asked to declare that they would decide the matter according to the Book of Allâh and *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and would not allow the Muslim *Ummah* to become the victim of war, disruption and disunity. Afterwards, the arbitrators were given a period of six months to examine the case and give their judgment at that time at Adhruh near Daumat Al-Jandal located between Kufah and Damascus. It was also decided that Abu Musa Ash'ari ﷺ while coming from Kufah, would have with him four hundred men sent by Ali ﷺ and Amr bin Al-Âs ﷺ, coming from Damascus, also would have an equal number from Mu'âwiyah ﷺ. Those eight hundred men will act as representatives of the Muslims as a whole.

Following this, both Ali ﷺ and Mu'âwiyah ﷺ asked their men to declare on oath that they would not target the lives and properties of the mediators, which was signed by Ash'ath bin Qais, Sa'd bin Qais

Hamadâni, Warqa bin Sumayr Al-Bajali, Abdullah bin Fahl Al-Ijli, Hujr bin Adi Kindi, Abdullah bin At-Tufail Al-Âmiri, Uqbah bin Ziyâd Hadrami, Yazid bin Tajhafah Tamimi, Mâlik bin Ka'b Hamadâni on behalf of Ali ؑ as witnesses and guarantors while Abul-A'war, Habib bin Maslamah, Zamûl bin Amr Al-Udhri, Hamzah bin Mâlik Hamadâni, Abdur-Rahmân bin Khâlid Makhzumi, Subai' bin Yazid Ansâri, Utbah bin Abu Sufyân, Yazid bin Al-Hur Absi put their signatures for Mu'âwiyah's side.

On being finalized, one copy of the declaration was given each to Abu Musa Ash'ari ؑ and Amr bin Al-Âs ؑ. Mâlik Ashtar refused to sign the document. Four days elapsed in giving the declaration a final shape and it was handed over to the arbitrators on Safar 13. Following this, the two armies moved back towards Kufah and Damascus respectively. Mu'âwiyah ؑ reached Damascus safe and sound but Ali ؑ had to face a new trouble.

### **Trouble caused by the Khawârij**

When Ali ؑ decided to leave the battlefield of Siffin on Safar 13, 37 AH, some people approached him and asked him to attack the Syrian army instead of going back to Kufah. "How can I commit a breach of promise after writing the declaration? We have now to wait until the month of Ramadân without even thinking of war after attaining peace," Ali ؑ firmly said. Although they went away, they started seeking support of the people against Ali ؑ and attempted to form separate groups. Ali ؑ left Kufah but a clash of opinions dominated the atmosphere throughout. Even though Ali ؑ worked hard to pacify the situation, it was in vain, for a section was engaged in fanning the fire of discord. The united front of Ali's army was now divided into scores of groups creating dissension and giving rise to chaos and disorder. And from a war of words they had come down to hitting and thrashing each other.

Of all the groups, two were strong, one completely opposing Ali ؑ and another one eulogizing him beyond all limits in response and in competition with the other group. Thus, the first group came to be called the Khawârij and the second one was the Shi'ite. It is quite interesting that the Khawârij group was formed under the leadership

of those who had forced Ali ؑ to call Mālik Ashtar back threatening him with the consequences of Uthmān ؑ. Although Ali ؑ repeatedly reminded them of their past activities in forcing him to stop fighting and bring peace to the people, but they paid no attention to his claim. At last, twelve thousand men separated themselves from Ali's army and moved towards Haraura'.

It was the group of the Khawārij. It settled in Haraura' and set Abdullah bin Al-Kawa the Imam of the prayers and Shabath bin Rib'i the commander. Shabath bin Rib'i was the same person whom Ali ؑ had twice sent to Mu'āwiyah ؑ as the member of the peace commission and on both occasions his provocative words worsened the possibility for a peaceful solution and the talks ended in failure. After establishing their administration in Haraura', the insurgents now declared: "Ba'ah is meant for Allāh the Almighty Alone. It is our duty to enjoin the good on people of the land and forbid the evil. There is no caliph or ruler in Islam. After gaining victory, all matters must be settled by mutual consultation of the Muslims and their majority should decide all issues. Both Ali and Mu'āwiyah are at fault."

When Ali ؑ came to know of the uprisings of the Khawārij, he observed utmost patience. On reaching Kufah, Ali ؑ consoled the relatives of those who had laid down their lives in Siffin and declared those killed as martyred. He then sent Abdullah bin Abbās ؑ to the Khawārij to pacify them and put them on the right path. But they were contentious on all issues and rejected the pleas of Abdullah bin Abbās ؑ.

In the meantime Ali ؑ himself went there. He first visited the camp of Yazid bin Qais because he had more influence on them. He first offered two Rak'at Salāt (prayer) and then appointed Yazid bin Qais the governor of Isfahan and Rey. He then came to the assembly where Abdullah bin Abbās ؑ was carrying on arguments with them and said, "Who among you is most wise and the leader of the group?" They replied, "Abdullah bin Al-Kawa." Ali ؑ then said turning to Abdullah, "You people had pledged your allegiance to me, then what is the reason behind your turning away after taking Ba'ah?" He replied, "It is because of your undue immovability."

Ali ؑ said, "By Allāh! I was not in favor of stopping the battle. But you people forced me to do so. Nevertheless, I have let both the arbitrators decide the issue according to the dictates of the Qur'ān. Thus if they give a verdict according to the Qur'ān, there is no harm in accepting this; if it is against the Qur'ān, I shall reject it outright." Having heard this, the Khawārij said, "Mu'āwiyah revolted and committed the crime of killing the Muslims and so the appointment of arbitrators in this matter is not justified. According to clear injunctions of the Qur'ān he is liable to be killed." Ali ؑ said, "I have not appointed anybody as arbitrator; the real arbitrator is the Qur'ān by all means and the men are appointed merely to give judgment according to the Book." The Khawārij then said, "What was the need of allotting six-months for the job?" Ali ؑ replied, "Maybe the dissenting voices among the Muslims will subside by then." The Khawārij then kept silent. Ali ؑ then asked them politely and affectionately, "Come let us go to Kufah and stay there during these six months, your mounts and beasts of burden will grow fat and strong enough to resume fighting against the enemy." Hearing this, they agreed and entered Basrah along with Ali ؑ and began to await the decision of the arbitrators. Ali ؑ then sent Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ to Basrah to perform his job as governor.

### **The Decision of the Arbitrators at Adhruh**

When the end of the six-month period drew near, Ali ؑ sent for Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ from Basrah. He then appointed Shuraih bin Hāni Al-Hārithi in charge of four hundred men and Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ to lead the prayers. They were then sent to Adhruh along with Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ. Similarly, Mu'āwiyah ؓ also sent Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ at the head of four hundred men. Some influential men from Makkah and Al-Madinah were also invited to join the peace efforts and they could not refuse to avail the opportunity of bringing the warring Muslims together and stopping the carnage. Several men including Abdullah bin Umar, Abdullah bin Zubair and Sa'd bin Waqqās ؓ came to Adhruh. The people were very curious to know the decision but the arbitrators held it back because they had to exchange views before making any announcement.



On the eve of the departure of Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ from Kufah to Adhruh, Hurqus bin Zuhair called on Ali ؓ on behalf of the Khawârij and submitted, "You have committed a blunder by accepting the arbitrator to give the decision in the matter. There is still time for you to back out from your promise and march on to attack your enemy. We stand by you." Ali ؓ said, "I cannot commit a breach of trust." This was the same Hurqus bin Zuhair who had headed the rioters against Uthmân ؓ and had now joined hands with the Khawârij.

Since Abu Musa's departure, Ali ؓ would write letters to him daily without fail; and Mu'âwiyah ؓ too did the same, for the issue was too delicate and needed their undivided attention. Ali ؓ sent his letters and messages in the name of Abdullah bin Abbâs ؓ while Mu'âwiyah ؓ addressed them to Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ. But the two addresses had different working conditions. Mu'âwiyah's men were too disciplined to ask anything about the letters while Abdullah bin Abbâs ؓ did not maintain secrecy because his men would sit around him and inquired about the contents of all the letters sent by Ali ؓ. They would grow angry when he kept anything secret. Gradually they turned against him and began to criticize him openly.

When Abdullah bin Umar, Abdur-Rahmân bin Abu Bakr, Abdullah bin Zubair, Abdur-Rahmân bin Al-Hârith, Abdur-Rahmân bin Abd Yaghuth Zuhri, Abu Jahm bin Hudhaifah, Mughirah bin Shu'bah, and Sa'd bin Waqqâs ؓ and others reached Adhruh, a meeting of distinguished persons was convened to look into the matter. Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ had Abu Musa ؓ admit that Uthmân bin Affân ؓ was put to death as an innocent man. Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ also had him to admit that on account of common ancestry, Mu'âwiyah ؓ was within his rights to claim *Qisâs* (retaliation) of Uthmân ؓ. These two issues were never denied by Abu Musa ؓ and he accepted both unreluctantly.

Following this, Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ raised the issue of the caliphate and said: "Mu'âwiyah belongs to a noble and renowned family of the Quraish. He is the brother of Umm Habibah, the wife of the Prophet ﷺ and the scribe of the revealed words."



Having heard all this, Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ raised his objection. He said, "Although I don't deny the excellence of Mu'awiyah and how he was entrusted with the responsibility of ruling the Muslims in the presence of Ali and other such men and he commands high respect for all these qualities, Ali still has a far greater right. He is the closest to the Prophet ﷺ by the ties of relationship; he belongs to a very noble family and is reckoned among the chiefs of the Quraish. He also enjoys a distinct place in regard to learning, bravery, and piety."

Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ argued, "Mu'awiyah is superior in administrative ability and political vision." Abu Musa ؓ replied, "These things are not worthy of consideration in comparison to piety and honesty." After such exchanges, Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ suggested that both Ali ؓ and Mu'awiyah ؓ be deposed and Abdullah bin Umar ؓ be chosen as caliph. Abdullah bin Umar ؓ, who was present in the meeting, said in a loud voice, "I don't agree to this suggestion." Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ said to Abu Musa ؓ, "Why don't you choose my son, Abdullah?" Abu Musa ؓ said, "Well, your son is very pious no doubt but you have put him to a great trial by plunging him into the battle."

Such inconclusive talks went on for sometime. After this, Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ put forward his proposal and said, "Since hostile relations between Ali ؓ and Mu'awiyah ؓ have brought untold miseries and sufferings to the Muslims as a whole, it is advisable that both should be deposed. Then the Muslims should choose a new caliph unanimously or by a majority opinion. With this suggestion agreed upon between the two, it was decided that the announcement should be made at the opening in front of the general assembly. They, however, anticipated rejection of the proposal by both Ali ؓ and Mu'awiyah ؓ. Nevertheless, a call was sounded for the people to assemble which they did with the utmost curiosity. Both the arbitrators then appeared on the scene.

## The Verdict

Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ asked Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ to announce the decision taken by them. Abu Musa ؓ ascended the pulpit and said addressing the people: "People! After much deliberation we could reach one and only one decision: I am sure this verdict will lead the Muslims as a

whole to peace and unity. Both Amr bin Al-Âs and I have decided to depose both Ali and Mu'âwiyah giving you the right to chose anybody as your caliph."

The entire congregation heard it and Abu Musa ؓ descended. Now Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ mounted the pulpit and said to the people: "All of you be witness that Abu Musa had deposed his friend Ali. But I, however, do not depose Mu'âwiyah and keep him at his place for he is the successor of the brutally martyred Caliph and has the right to succeed him."

Had Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ lent total support to the decision announced by Abu Musa ؓ without saying anything in support of Mu'âwiyah ؓ, the judgment would not have suffered such a disgrace and setback. There may be some weakness in the statement of Abu Musa ؓ but it was decidedly above dishonesty and manipulation and would not have set eight hundred Muslims against it. Even though they were given the right to choose a new caliph, but he could not have been stronger than Ali ؓ or Mu'âwiyah ؓ. Furthermore, a third man as a caliph could have aggravated the already tense situation that was filled with bitterness and bad blood.

In truth, Mu'âwiyah ؓ was not in favor of peace with Ali ؓ, otherwise he would have proposed arbitration before the breakout of the battle of Siffin. But he put forward his proposal only when he was sure of his defeat. So, his taking resort to the Book of Allâh was nothing but a clever device to escape the certain defeat. Ali ؓ had, on the other hand, accepted the peace proposal very reluctantly and under serious threat and compulsion. In short, Abdullah bin Abbâs ؓ and many others blamed Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ of being deceived. Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ rose to protest against the trick played by Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ with the result that chaos and disorder enveloped the entire place.

Shuraih bin Hâni attacked Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ with his sword and he responded with a counterattack but the people saved the situation. The erupting disorder went in favor of Mu'âwiyah ؓ. It was because the Syrians and the Iraqis could no longer stay in the company of one another and they put up a resolution with common consent to depart. Abu Musa Ash'ari ؓ and Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ left for Damascus along

with their men while Shuraih and Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ proceeded to Kufah in the company of his own people. The people from Makkah and Al-Madinah also left the place dejected and shocked.

[The details presented by the compiler and other historians regarding the selection of the arbitrators and the decision have been based on the Shiite narratives and are full of doubts and faults. It is not imaginable that in the case of such an important issue, the arbitrators had been so negligent that they did nothing for six months and didn't consider any thing until the day of announcement, then suddenly they have announced the decision after a little consideration on some ordinary issues at that time. And in that decision also, one arbitrator had cheated half the nation, inviting the danger of a more severe fight than Siffin between the two parties.

In fact, the two arbitrators had reached a compact decision after their sincere efforts of six months and after collecting the opinions of the nation. This decision was also announced but the documentation of the decision has been concealed or destroyed in such a way that there is no trace of it. In its place, a fabricated story has been presented with every possible relief for Ali ؓ, and with aspects of blames on the Syrians and even the arbitrators. However, from the folds of the events and the overall condition of the occurrences thereafter, the original decision can be extracted as follows:

1. Because Ali took the *Bai'ah* in a doubtful atmosphere; kept with him the murderers of Uthmān; claimed himself to be the rightful caliph and fought every such person who denied his *Bai'ah*, but didn't agree to take *Qisās* (retaliation) from the murderers of Uthmān, although it was an obligation upon him as a caliph. So, he should be removed from the caliphate and prevented from using sword as a caliph. But the areas under his control should remain under him as a governor until a new caliph assumes his responsibilities.

2. Mu'āwiyah was neither a caliph nor he claimed caliphate. But the areas under him were under his governorship only and these should remain so until the new caliph is selected.

3. After the restoration of normalcy, a body of distinguished Muslims including Ali and Mu'āwiyah, should select a suitable and impartial person freely as a caliph.

4. The new caliph will be responsible for the investigation and the *Qisās* of the murder of Uthmān, so Mu'āwiyah should remain quiet about his claim of *Qisās* of Uthmān until the new caliph assumes his responsibility.

The first three points of this decision can be found in slightly altered form in all the history books. It is the characteristic of Shiites that they change an event in such a condition and such a trick that all the good and virtuous aspects are turned into evil and vicious appearance. As they have changed the good proposal of making the Book of Allāh a judge to stop the battle of Siffin, into a cheating trick of raising the Qur'ān on spears to deceit Ali and to avoid the defeat; while the truth was that only one man took the Qur'ān to Ali.

The fourth point is proved right by the fact that after it, Mu'āwiyah remained quiet about his claims regarding *Qisās* of Uthmān.

The third point is verified by a narration of Ibn Umar in *Sahih Bukhari* which states that he went to the gathering to hear the decision of the arbitrators by the insistence of Hafsah. He said: "When the people dispersed (after hearing the decision), Mu'āwiyah delivered a *Khutbah* and said: 'Whoever wants to say something in this matter (the caliphate), he should present his head for us. (He should remember that) we are more rightful to it than him and his father.'" (*Bukhari* 4108, *Fath Al-Bari* 7/403)

This shows that the arbitrators had made a decision for the selection of a caliph unanimously apart from the two fighting chiefs. Mu'āwiyah was challenging the same person who may be the candidate of caliphate after the decision.

The sitting in which Mu'āwiyah made the challenge, was not a gathering of people from both the sides, but it was a group of such great Companions who remained neutral in the fight. Even Habib bin Maslamah was not present in the gathering who was very close to Mu'āwiyah. The Companions surely had guessed about the attitude of Mu'āwiyah that he would not accept any other

caliph easily, and there was a possibility of severe resistance from his side; and in such a case the selection of a new caliph would create more turmoil.

Moreover, if the historic narratives are correct, when the decision was reported to Ali ؑ, he denied accepting it saying that the decision was not according to the Book of Allāh, and that the arbitrators had exceeded in their powers. While no point of the decision was against the Book of Allāh, nor the arbitrators had decided anything exceeding their powers. However, the result of the attitude of Ali ؑ and Mu'āwiyah ؑ both, was that the decision of the arbitrators was not implemented effectively and both the persons carried their governing in the respective areas, and made efforts to take up the areas governed by the other.]

The Syrian people along with Amr bin Al-Ās ؑ were going back happy at their victory, while the party accompanying Abdullah bin Abbās ؑ and Shuraih bin Hâni were making their journey in a chaotic state accusing one another for the failures they experienced. They showed the same sign of disunity and disorder which was witnessed when Ali ؑ was going back to Kufah with his troops. After reaching Kufah, Abdullah bin Abbās ؑ told the whole story to Ali ؑ, and he declared the verdict of Abu Musa ؑ and Amr bin Al-Ās ؑ against the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh and rejected it outright. He also cursed Mu'āwiyah, Amr bin Al-Ās ؑ, Habib bin Maslamah, Abdur-Rahmân bin Mukhallad, Dahhâk bin Qais, Walid, and Abul-A'war. When Mu'āwiyah ؑ came to know of this, he too cursed Ali ؑ; and it was the beginning of cursing and reproaching one another by their respective followers.

The disorder and confusion that charged the atmosphere of Adhruh with acrimony of the worst nature, paved the way for Mu'āwiyah ؑ to be addressed as the Chief of the believers and the Caliph of the Muslims. But because of the events of Adhruh, no new groups joined him. Ali ؑ was already facing trouble, which was only multiplied by now. His fresh trouble now was to make his own people understand that the verdict given at Adhruh was not acceptable because the arbitrators themselves had dissented in their opinion on the issue. In addition, the Qur'ân had not given them permission to leave its track

to follow their personal opinion. Ali ؑ spent the next few days in putting into the minds of his people that the decision of the arbitrators being unacceptable, they should invade Syria without loss of time. They at last agreed.

### **Disruptive Activities of the Khawârij**

When the Khawârij came to know of this decision, they grew anxious and they took a new turn. It has already been mentioned that Hurqus bin Zuhair had asked Ali ؑ to attack the Syrians instead of agreeing with the proposal of arbitration. Now Zur'ah bin Al-Burj and Hurqus bin Zuhair both being the chieftains of the Khawârij, came to Ali ؑ and declared him guilty of first rejecting and then accepting the proposal advanced by the Khawârij. Now, on this score, they demanded Ali ؑ to show his repentance for his mistake in order to receive their support. But Ali ؑ turned down their demand pleading his innocence over the issue. Hearing this, both of them got up and left the place saying: "There is no command (acceptable) except of Allâh."

When, following this event, Ali ؑ ascended the pulpit of the mosque to deliver his address, a Khârij sounded in a loud voice from a corner: "There is no command (acceptable) except of Allâh." Ali ؑ remarked, "Behold, these people extract untruth from the Word of Truth." He then resumed his address and the same voice came again interrupting him: "There is no command (acceptable) except of Allâh."

Thereupon Ali ؑ said, "You people are treating me improperly. We do not debar you from making entry into the mosque, and we gave you your share from the booty while you remained with us; we shall not fight with you unless you take the initiative, and we shall be awaiting Allah's Decision about you." Saying this, he descended the pulpit and went away. The Khawârij also left the mosque and gathered in the house of Abdullah bin Wahb for consultations. Abdullah bin Wahb, Hurqus bin Zuhair, Hamzah bin Sinân, Zaid bin Husain At-Tai', and Shuraih bin Aufa 'Absi decided, after a good deal of deliberations, that they should leave Basrah and make the hills the seat of their independent rule separate from Ali ؑ. Hamzah bin Sinân Asadi proposed to choose a chief and give him the standard before proceeding further.

The next day they assembled again in the house of Shuraih, and Abdullah bin Wahb was elected the chief of the Khawârij. They took Bai'ah at his hands. Abdullah bin Wahb then suggested to move towards a city where the Divine command could be enforced. At last they agreed on Madâ'in, which they could, according to them, capture comparatively easily. Zaid bin Husain proposed to move in twos, fours or tens, for collective movement was likely to be given chase. They also decided to first halt at Naharwân and ask their friends and supporters in Basrah to join them before reaching Madâ'in. This suggestion gained the support of one and all. The plan was implemented according to the decision. Mis'ar bin Fadaki Taimi came out at the head of five hundred Khawârij. When Ali ؑ came to know of the developments, he sent message to Sa'd bin Mas'ud, the governor of Madâ'in through a speedy courier to put a check on the Khawârij in Madâ'in. Sa'd deputed his nephew in Madâ'in and moved out at the head of a contingent. He came across a band of the Khawârij on the way at Karkh and challenged them which led to an encounter continuing until evening. But the Khawârij crossed the Tigris in the darkness of night. The Khawârij from Basrah also crossed the Tigris and joined their friends in Naharwân after an encounter with Sa'd's contingent. At Naharwân they consolidated their position and issued an edict of blasphemy against Ali ؑ for killing the supporters of the Caliph. In a short time their number rose to twenty-five thousand.

### **Battle of Naharwân**

After the exit of the Khawârij from Kufah, Ali ؑ persuaded the Kufis to make preparations for the invasion of Syria. He preferred the ouster of Mu'âwiyah ؑ to the curbing of the Khawârij. Thus he sent a message to Abdullah bin Abbâs ؑ in Basrah to send the maximum number of troops for launching an attack on Syria. Although Basrah had more than sixty thousand fighters, the letter of Ali ؑ could rouse only three thousand for fighting. Kufah too showed signs of lack of interest. When three thousand troops headed by Jâriyah bin Qudâmah ؑ reached Kufah, Ali ؑ made a fresh attempt to kindle in Kufis the fire of zeal and fervor and his renewed efforts hit the mark. Forty thousand man gathered under the flag of Ali ؑ.



He also wrote the Khawârij a letter calling them to lend their support in the task of attacking Syria. Abdullah bin Wahb read out the letter to his people and wrote back with common consent: "You appointed the arbitrators against the Command of Allâh and His Messenger. And you have now developed a desire to invade Syria on the demand of your self's desire. However, if you show your repentance after declaring yourself as blasphemous, we are ready to help you, otherwise we are prepared to fight against you."

Although the letter saddened Ali ؑ, he did not give up his determination to invade Syria. He made an all-out effort to bring the Khawârij back to righteousness but in vain. When Ali ؑ reminded them of their mounting pressure on him to stop the attack on the Syrian Army, they argued that they admitted their fault and he should also follow suit. He should also come back to the fold of Islam by declaring himself blasphemous as they did. This was the only way they could take back their edict against him, otherwise they will wage *Jihâd* against him considering him a *Kafir* (disbeliever).

Ali ؑ, however, decided to carry out his campaign against Syria and ignore the insane demand of the Khawârij, that he was informed of the martyrdom of Abdullah bin Khabbâb ؑ. The victim passed through Naharwân during a journey. A group of the Khawârij came to know that he was a Companion. They came to him and asked about Abu Bakr and Umar ؓ. Abdullah bin Khabbâb ؑ said, "Both of them were very pious and true servants of Allâh the Almighty." They then inquired of the first and the last parts of the caliphate of Uthmân ؑ. He replied, "He was truth-loving from beginning to the end." They then wanted to know his opinion about Ali ؑ before and after the appointment of the arbitrators. He stated, "Ali knows and understands the injunctions of Allâh and His Messenger more than you all." Hearing this, the Khawârij fell in wrath and killed Khabbâb ؑ, his wife and his fellow travelers.

On being informed of this, Ali ؑ asked Hârith bin Murrah to make an inquiry into the matter. The Khawârij killed him also. Along with this, it was reported to Ali ؑ that they were killing all those who disagreed with them. Thus, Ali's men grew anxious that the Khawârij would capture Kufah and Basrah and kill their wives and children in case



they advanced towards Syria. They marched towards the Khawârij instead of Syria and sent them the following message from a place nearby: "Hand over those among you who have killed our brothers so that we can kill them according to the law of *Qisâs*, and leave you to yourselves in order to proceed to Syria. May Allâh the Almighty bring you back to the right path while we finish with the Syrians."

Following this, Ali ؑ sent a number of Companions one by one to preach to them righteousness and truth. He also invited the deputation of the Khawârij to instill in their minds that they were totally responsible for the appointment of the arbitrators, and they should join him forgetting the past. But every time they had the same answer to give and the same argument to advance. Ali ؑ would say, "I believed in Allâh and migrated in His way, how can I declare myself a disbeliever?"

At last Ali ؑ himself went to the camp of the Khawârij and began to preach them to use wisdom and adopt righteousness. Fearing the strength of the impression Ali's speech would have on their people, the chieftains asked them not to pay attention to what he said and go to war.

In view of their attitude, Ali ؑ came back and set himself to the task of organizing his troops and appointing commanding officers of the attacking army. This task being over, Ali ؑ gave Abu Ayub Ansâri ؑ the flag of peace and asked him to ascend to a raised spot and give a general call saying: "Those who come to us without a fight will get peace, and those who go to Kufah or Madâ'in will also enjoy peace." Having heard this announcement, Farwah bin Naufal Ashja'i moved apart with five hundred horsemen, some people left for Kufah while some others either went to Madâ'in or came to join Ali's troops, with the result less than one-third of the men were left with the Khawârij. Ali ؑ then launched a massive attack and put the rest to death.

All the prominent chieftains of the Khawârij like Abdullah bin Wahb, Zaid bin Husain, Hurqus bin Zuhair, Abdullah bin Shajarah, and Shuraih bin Aufa lost their lives. Only nine of them saved themselves by fleeing from the scene of death. Ali ؑ came back leaving their dead bodies unburied.

Finished with the necessary task of curbing the uprisings of the Khawārij, Ali ؑ decided to march towards Syria. Ash'ath bin Qais advised him to let the army take a few days rest, but he preferred to stay at Nukhailah issuing orders for one and all to refrain from going to Kufah until the Syrian campaign was completed. But they left for home and Ali ؑ also had to return to Kufah, when he found the camp without fighters. In Kufah, Ali ؑ addressed them to get prepared for the invasion of Syria but none of them appeared to be interested in the Syrian campaign. In view of their cold response, Ali ؑ was also forced to abandon his campaign against Syria.

### State of Egypt

As already mentioned, Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؑ, the governor of Egypt, was not of any help to Ali ؑ against Mu'āwiyah ؑ owing to his bitter engagements and internal feuds with those who wouldn't take Bai'ah until Uthmān's murderers were punished. Finishing with the battle of Siffin, Ali ؑ sent Mālik Ashtar Nakha'i as the governor of Jazirah but very shortly sent him to Egypt as governor.

When Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؑ came to know of this, he grew sorry and dejected. Mu'āwiyah ؑ became anxious because of Ashtar's qualities of thought and action. But Mālik Ashtar died suddenly in route to Egypt and Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؑ remained in power. Following the death of Mālik Ashtar, Ali ؑ wrote Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؑ that he had sent Ashtar as governor of Egypt not because he was angry with him but because Ashtar could solve some political matters more skillfully. But, since, Ashtar died he was allowed to manage the affairs of Egypt as usual. Moreover, he was required to face the enemy with courage and determination.

In reply to the letter, Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ؑ wrote that he was loyal to him and was ready to fight his (Ali's) enemies at any time. These events had taken place before the decision of the arbitrators.

The Syrians later accepted Mu'āwiyah ؑ as Caliph and it added to his power and grandeur. He then entered into correspondence with Mu'āwiyah bin Hudaij and those who opposed Muhammad bin Abu

Bakr ﷺ to encourage them. They sought help from Mu'āwiyah ﷺ and that was what he intended. Thus he lost no time in dispatching Amr bin Al-Ās ﷺ at the head of six thousand troops with a letter in the name of Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ﷺ. Reaching close to Egypt, Amr bin Al-Ās ﷺ sent Mu'āwiyah's letter to Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ﷺ along with his own. Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ﷺ sent both the letters to Ali ﷺ in Kufah.

Ali ﷺ gathered the people and roused them to take part in the Egyptian campaign but not more than two thousand men were ready to fight. At last, he sent these two thousand men to Egypt under the command of Mālik bin Ka'b. Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ﷺ had already sent two thousand troops against Amr bin Al-Ās ﷺ under the command of Kinānah bin Bishr who was martyred fighting with the Syrians and his men either fled from the field or were killed fighting.

With the news of the defeat, Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ﷺ decided to personally lead his troops. The awe-stricken men of Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ﷺ showed no courage to face the Syrians and fled, leaving their commander who was fighting alone, he came back from the battlefield and took refuge in the house of Jabalah bin Masruq. The house was surrounded by the Syrians and the companions of Mu'āwiyah bin Hudaij. Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ﷺ came out of the house and was arrested trying to fight his opponents. Mu'āwiyah bin Hudaij killed him and burned him putting his body inside the skin of a dead donkey.

The news of the incident was brought to Ali ﷺ by his spy Abdur-Rahmān bin Shabib Fazāri. He at once sent someone to bring Mālik bin Ka'b back. Mālik bin Ka'b had covered about half the distance when Hajjāj bin Amr bin Ghaziyah Ansāri came across and informed him of the assassination of Muhammad bin Abu Bakr ﷺ and Amr bin Al-Ās' victory over Egypt. Meanwhile, Ali ﷺ assembled the people of Kufah and reproached them for their laziness and neglect. But this stirring address failed to inspire the audience and they remained unmoved. Now, Ali ﷺ was under circumstantial compulsion to give up the campaign of Egypt and Syria.

## **Attempts made to capture Other Provinces**

The conquest of Egypt was very encouraging for Mu'āwiyah ؓ. His next step was to wrest even Basrah from the hands of Ali ؓ. The atmosphere of Basrah was not much different from Egypt. The battle of Jamal had angered them with Ali ؓ and a growing demand for revenging the blood of Uthmān ؓ had developed among the people in general. Taking advantage of the situation, Mu'āwiyah ؓ sent Abdullah bin Al-Hadrami towards Basrah with the instruction that the elements antagonistic to Ali ؓ be assimilated and their hearts won by all means. When Ibn Al-Hadrami reached Basrah, he found the situation in Basrah conducive to his plan particularly when Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ, the governor of Basrah was not present and had gone to Ali ؓ. A large party of the people joined him. Being informed of the new development in Basrah, Ali ؓ made no delay in sending A'in bin Duba'ah with the instruction of creating a rift among those who had joined hands with Ibn Al-Hadrami. He was crowned with success in the task entrusted to him. Thus the campaign of Abdullah bin Al-Hadrami ended in his assassination in the last days of 38 AH, in Basrah.

In 39 AH, when the Persians noticed that Basrah was divided between the followers of Ali ؓ and Mu'āwiyah ؓ, they rose in revolt and expelled the governor, Sahl bin Hunaif, from their territory. Ali ؓ wrote Ibn Abbās ؓ, the governor of Basrah to send Ziyād to Persia who went there and put down the revolt with a heavy hand.

In a situation, fraught with discontent and uprising against Ali ؓ, Mu'āwiyah ؓ took advantage of the situation by using generosity, forgiveness, strategies and appreciation to one and all. This attitude proved fruitful as people in large numbers from Al-Madinah, Tā'if and Yemen drew near to him. He also sent Nu'mān bin Bashir to Ainut-Tamr where Mālik bin Ka'b, the governor did not receive reinforcements from Ali ؓ and yielded the territory to the Syrian commander. Madā'in and Anbār met the same fate and Sufyān bin Auf returned to Damascus with huge possessions from these territories. Although Ali ؓ made an advancement to intercept him, Sufyān bin Auf got away uncaught.

## **Ali's Caliphate confined to Iraq and Iran**

Busr bin Abu Artah was dispatched to the Hijāz and Yemen while the Madinites took the oath of allegiance at the hand of Mu'āwiyah ؓ followed by the Makkans and Yemenites. Ubaidullah bin Abbās ؓ was turned out from San'ā', the capital of Yemen. In short, by 40 AH, Yemen, Hijāz, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt became provinces under the control of Mu'āwiyah ؓ and these territories were free from the weaknesses of discontent, insurgence, and internal disputes.

Both Ali ؓ and Mu'āwiyah ؓ had reached consensus on the issue of leaving Makkah and Al-Madinah outside their rule. Ali's caliphate was confined to Iraq and Iran. But a large number of Arabian tribes of Iraq lacked attachment with his caliphate while the Persians were also dreaming of their own rule. Even Kufah and Basrah, the two principal cities had a considerable number of men who preferred Mu'āwiyah ؓ to Ali ؓ. Even though Ali ؓ was determined to establish one Islamic rule throughout by virtue of his courage and bravery, his men showed a lack of courage and loyalty. Ali's army was largely manned by non-Arabs while that of Mu'āwiyah's had mostly Arabs in command. With the inclusion of Hijāz and Yemen, Mu'āwiyah's army had achieved much strength and popularity. Since, he was not on equality with Ali ؓ in personal status, greatness and glory, he could not claim for himself the same position in the world of Islam and so he continued to fear Ali ؓ.

## **Abdullah bin Abbās' Departure from Basrah**

During the beginning of 40 AH, one more ugly incident took place. Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ, the governor of Basrah, grew angry with Ali ؓ and left Basrah. The exit of Abdullah ؓ was on account of a false complaint lodged to Ali ؓ by Abul-Aswad of Basrah that he had spent from the public treasury without seeking permission from the Caliph. Ali ؓ thanked Abul-Aswad for bringing the irregularities of the governor to the knowledge of the Caliph and held this as an act of sympathy. He also wrote Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ that he had received such a complaint and demanded an explanation from him as well. But

the letter did not mention the name of Abul-Aswad. Abdullah bin Abbās ؓ wrote back that the complaint was totally false and baseless for what he had expended was from his personal account and had nothing to do with the public treasury. Ali ؓ wrote him again, "If you claim that the money spent belonged to yourself then wherefrom did you get the money and where had you deposited that?" In reply to the letter Abdullah ؓ wrote back, "I hate such a governorship, you may choose anybody else as the governor of Basrah. What I spent was my personal possession and I have every right to spend it." He dispatched the letter to Ali ؓ and with it he quit his post and left for Makkah.

### **Ali's Martyrdom**

During these very days Aqil bin Abu Tālib ؓ, the brother of Ali ؓ grew angry with him and went to Mu'āwiyah ؓ who welcomed him and fixed a considerable daily allowance for him. Ali ؓ felt deeply aggrieved at the separation of Aqil ؓ and his joining the camp of Mu'āwiyah ؓ. Now Ali ؓ thought military action against Mu'āwiyah ؓ a necessity. It was an occasion when sixty thousand Kufis took *Bai'ah* at Ali's hands to support him and fight on his behalf while they had life in them. He then engaged himself in the task of collecting more people in addition to the sixty thousand men and procure as much military equipment as he could.

### **Dangerous Plan of the Khawārij**

It has been mentioned above that only nine persons from the Khawārij survived the battle of Naharwān. They were the persons that were in the leadership positions among the Khawārij, at first they spread into various parts of Persia and launched violent propaganda attacks and hatched conspiracies against Ali ؓ. When their efforts proved fruitless, they came to Iraq and Hijāz and started seeking listeners. At last, three persons, Abdur-Rahmān bin Muljam Murādi, Burak bin Abdullah Tamimi and Amr bin Bakr Tamimi gathered together in Makkah and kept expressing profound grief over the men slain in Naharwān. At last they entered into a pact to do away with the three men in power that had been putting the entire world of

Islam to such a great loss and destruction. According to their plan Abdur-Rahmân bin Muljam Murâdi-the Egyptian, Burak bin Abdullah Tamimi, and Amr bin Bakr Tamimi Sa'di each agreed to kill Ali, Mu'âwiyah and Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ respectively. Ramadân 16 and the morning prayer were fixed as the date and time of the assassinations. With this nefarious plan in view, they left for Kufah, Damascus and Egypt.

When the date fixed for killing came, Burak bin Abdullah Tamimi entered the mosque of Damascus and hit Mu'âwiyah with his sword while he was leading *Fajr* prayer. He then fled the mosque but was caught. His mission failed because the injuries his victim received were not fatal. Mu'âwiyah ؓ regained his health after a couple of days of treatment. Burak was killed then and there, or after several years of captivity according to another narrative. Mu'âwiyah ؓ then practiced caution and put guards for his safety inside the mosque.

On the same day and date, Amr bin Bakr struck Kharijah bin Abu Habibah bin Amr and killed him with his sword mistaking him to be Amir bin Al-Âs ؓ while he was leading the *Fajr* prayer in the mosque of Egypt. That morning Amr bin Al-Âs ؓ was absent due to illness and Kharijah bin Abu Habibah, a military officer was leading the prayer as his substitute. The same day Abdur-Rahmân bin Muljam attacked Ali ؓ in Kufah Mosque while he was leading the *Fajr* prayer and left him critically injured, and he died after two days. It is narrated that Abdur-Rahmân bin Muljam came to Kufah and met his friends but told none about his plan. After much deliberations he acquainted his friend Shabib bin Bajrah Ashja'i with his plan and sought his help in killing Ali ؓ in return for the killings in Naharwân. He agreed after some initial reluctance. Furthermore, he came into contact with the relatives of those ten persons of Tamim tribe who were killed in Naharwân and took advantage of their anger against Ali ؓ.

Ibn Muljam came closer to them and established friendly terms with them. Among them he saw a very beautiful women named Qatâm. Her father and brother were also killed in Naharwân. Ibn Muljam asked for her hand in marriage. She agreed and the head of Ali ؓ was the bridal money. Ibn Muljam who had come with the same

purpose readily agreed to her terms. She then asked a person from her relatives, named Wardân to help Ibn Muljam. On the appointed day Ibn Muljam, Shabib bin Bajrah and Wardân came to the mosque and hid themselves near the door from the night before the fateful morning. Ali ؑ entered the mosque as usual calling people for prayer. First of all Wardân came out and struck him with his sword but his sword hit the threshold or the wall and Ali ؑ safely went ahead. But Ibn Muljam darted towards Ali ؑ and struck his forehead with his sword, which gave a deep injury. Ali ؑ called out to catch them. The people assembled in the mosque ran after the culprits. Wardân and Shabib fled the mosque but Ibn Muljam could not and was caught inside the mosque.

A Hadrami caught Shabib but he slipped out of his hands and then disappeared. Wardân fled to his house but was caught there and put to death. Ibn Muljam was brought before Ali ؑ. He ordered saying "He is to be killed if I succumb to my injuries; in case I recover, I shall deal with him." He then turned towards Banu Abdul-Muttalib and said, "Make not my assassination a pretext for shedding Muslim blood; you will kill only my assassin by way of Qisâs. Afterwards he said addressing his elder son Hasan ؑ, "O Hasan ! If I succumb to the injuries I have received, you will kill him with a stroke of your sword but avoid mutilation for the Prophet ﷺ has strictly forbidden this."

Although Ibn Muljam's sword had gone down deep into the brain of Ali ؑ, he remained alive through Friday and died only on Saturday, Ramadan 17. A little before his death Jundub bin Abdullah came to him and said, "May we elect Hasan as Caliph in case you pass away?" He replied, "I have nothing to say about it, you will do according to the need of the hour."

Following this he called Hasnain (Hasan and Husain) ؑ and said, "I tell you to keep fearing Allâh and not to indulge in worldliness. Express no sorrow over what you are not able to get. Always say the right thing and show mercy to the orphans and help the helpless. Extend your help to the oppressed while keep opposing the oppressors and keep following the Qur'ân without fearing reproach in carrying out the Commands of Allâh." He then said, addressing



Muhammad bin Al-Hanafiyah, "I tell you to follow what I have told. Moreover, show respect to both your brothers; they command a greater right on you and you must not do anything against their will." Thereafter he turned to Hasnain and said, "You should also treat Muhammad bin Al-Hanafiyah well and keep making concessions to him." He then took to dictating his will in general when the last hour approached and he bade his last farewell with *La ilaha illallah* (There is no God except Allâh) on his lips.

### **Ali's Grave traceless**

Following the death of Ali, Ibn Muljam was made to appear before Hasan who killed him with one stroke of his sword. Ali was honored with martyrdom at the age of sixty-three and passed five years as a caliph. Hasan, Husain and Abdullah bin Ja'far washed his body and shrouded him in three pieces of cloth without a shirt.

Hasan led the funeral prayer. But there is a wide difference of opinion with regard to his burial ground. Some people say that he was buried in the Kufah Mosque while others say that he was buried in his house, or somewhere ten miles away from Kufah.

According to some narratives, Hasan buried him at an unknown place after taking his body out of his grave anticipating an act of desecration from the Khawârij. Still one more narrative says that his bier was carried to Al-Madinah to bury him near the grave of Prophet. But the camel carrying the body fled away and remained traceless. Contradicting this narrative, yet another one lends support to the opinion that the camel with the body of Ali was traced at Tai and he was buried there. It is a wonder that the grave of such a great personality lies traceless to this day. However, the reason behind his burial at an unknown place was the Khawârij menace.

### **Wives and Children**

Ali married nine wives at different times and had fourteen sons and seventeen daughters. He was first married to Fâtimah, the daughter of the Prophet who gave him two sons, Hasan and Husain, and two daughters Zainab and Umm Kulthum. After

the death of Fâtimah ؑ, he married Umm-un-Nabiyin bint Harâm Kalâbiah who gave him four sons, Abbâs, Ja'far, Abdullah and Uthmân ؑ.

His third wife was Laila bint Mas'ud bin Khâlid from whom Ubaidullah and Abu Bakr ؑ were born. The fourth Asma' bint Umais gave him Muhammad Al-Asghar and Yahya. These eight brothers were martyred fighting with Husain ؑ in Karbala. His fifth wife Umâmah bint Abul-Âs bin Ar-Rabi' bin Abdul-Uzza bin Abd Shams whose mother was Zainah, the daughter of the Prophet ﷺ and Muhammad Al-Ausat was born to her.

His sixth marriage was with Khaulah bint Ja'far who was from Banu Hanifah, he had with her Muhammad Al-Akhar also known as Muhammad bin Al-Hanafiyah. From his seventh marriage with Sahba bint Rabi'ah Taghlabiah he got Umar bin Ali, Ruqayyah bint Ali. His eighth wife was Umm Saeed bint Urwah bin Mas'ud Thaqafiyah with whom he got Umm Hasan, Ramlat-ul-Kubra and Umm Kulthum Sughra.

His ninth and the last marriage was with Mukhbi'ah the daughter of Imra-ul-Qais bin Adi Kalbiyah gave him a daughter who died young. He had some other daughters too but their names are unknown. His one son Aun is stated to be born to Asma' bint Umais. However, Ali's progeny came from Hasan, Husain, Muhammad bin Al-Hanafiyah, Abbâs and Ja'far ؑ while the others did not survive long.

### **A Glance at Ali's Caliphate**

Ali ؑ was the last in the line of those who commanded respect throughout the world of Islam. None after him could fight evil and promote good. When Aishah ؑ heard the sad news of Ali's death, she observed: "Now the people are at liberty to do what they like, for none is left to prevent them from wrongdoings."

Ali ؑ was above craftiness. He was truth loving to the core. At first he considered himself more within his rights to become the Caliph owing to his close relationship with the Prophet ﷺ. Thus he did not keep it secret from others and kept from making the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr ؑ for sometime. During these same days, Abu Sufyân

instigated him to rise against Abu Bakr but he rebuked him rather violently and with contempt for he hated such an act. When he reconciled himself with the reality that the job of a caliph required qualities of head and heart other than mere relationship, he found Abu Bakr worthy of the responsibilities and pledged his allegiance to him on his own and remained loyal to him throughout.

During his caliphate, Umar Fâruq sought Ali's advice and held it valuable. He lent his sincere advice to Uthmân thinking least whether he acted upon it or not. And whenever he found any of Uthmân's action objectionable, he opposed it without any reservation.

When the people opposed Uthmân, he supported them to the extent that it was valid. When the rioters mounted their violent pressure on Uthmân and an ugly situation was created, he showed no craftiness in keeping his position clear and remained satisfied with the clarity of his conscience. When following the assassination of Uthmân, the people rose to pledge their allegiance to him, he accepted for he considered himself more worthy than others for the job.

In short, his deeds and actions proved beyond doubt that he was never reluctant to speak the truth regardless of the consequences. His face was the index of his feelings and his exterior was the mirror of his interior. He was like an unsheathed sword and would speak the truth frankly in every situation. Another person would have handed over Muhammad bin Abu Bakr and Mâlik Ashtar to be killed by way of Qisâs for Uthmân's blood and thus bought peace and security for himself. But since he could not obtain solid evidence against the assassins of Uthmân, he held himself back from punishing the accused and faced the resultant troubles but refused to bow down to his opponents.

Majority of the persons Ali had to deal with were crafty, shrewd and expedient. The Islamic atmosphere created by the Prophet, which continued to exist through the period of Umar Fâruq, did not remain intact after more people from Persia, Egypt, and the other lands entered the folds of Islam. Racial and ancestral superiority, worldliness, desire for a comfortable and luxurious life distorted

much of the real face of Islam. During his tenure the number of Companions had significantly decreased. Great and influential Companions had already passed away and the rest had shifted from Al-Madinah to settle in Kufah, Basrah, Damascus, Egypt, Yemen, Makkah and Al-Madinah. Up to the period of Umar Fâruq ؓ, almost all the Companions lived in Al-Madinah. Ali ؓ shifted the capital of Islam from Al-Madinah to Kufah but he did not make any substantial gain from this change. He was deprived of the advantages he could have gained in Al-Madinah. He failed to attract help from the Hijâz because with the change of capital, the importance of the Hijâz was diminished.

During the blessed period of the Prophet ﷺ the hypocrites and conspirators tried their best to put the Muslims to trouble and loss but their nefarious plans did not bear fruit. During the era of Abu Bakr Siddiq and Umar Fâruq ؓ, those who had vested interests, left no stone unturned to inflict injuries to Islam but they were dealt with severely. They first got an opportunity to raise their heads during the caliphate of Uthmân bin Affân ؓ, and Ali ؓ as his successor, had to bear the brunt of the dealings of his predecessor. Furthermore, if he had some more years as a caliph, he could have done away with the mischief-mongers and power hungry elements because in spite of the multiple problems assailing him, he had the courage and determination to combat them all. He never yielded to despair and discouragement. However, it was the Will of Allâh for him to depart leaving the field open for Banu Umayyah.

The Banu Umayyah tribe considered itself the principal power of Arabia and treated Banu Hâshim as its rival. Although Islam uprooted evils of racial and ancestral snobbery, Uthmân's caliphate revived it. Banu Umayyah found in his caliphate a golden opportunity to restore the lost power and leadership and the hypocrites aided and abetted their plans. It was such a loss to Islam that Ali ؓ could not compensate for it during his entire tenure until his martyrdom.

If we take the campaigns of Ali ؓ and Mu'âwiyah ؓ and the opposition of Zubair ؓ and Talhah ؓ as cases similar to those of our times, we are grossly mistaken. We can't measure their moral standards with our own. It is worth noting that Talhah ؓ and Zubair

came to the battlefield with massive preparations against Ali, but a *Hadith* of the Prophet made both of them keep from fighting and no amount of lashing and lambasting could rouse them to go against Ali. It is an undeniable fact that fighting was natural for them but one *Hadith* of the Prophet changed their outlook and their course of action.

Our religious leaders and scholars today indulge in a futile war of words of a shameful nature and sometimes go to law courts for worldly decisions on religious issues. No Verse of the Qur'an or *Hadith* of the Prophet proves effective enough to make them accept the truth. It has already been mentioned that Mu'awiyah had sought from Ali the issue of the inheritance of a eunuch after the battle of Siffin and the judgment of the arbitrators.

When Ali entered Basrah, Qais bin Ubadah stated that the people said, "The Prophet told you that you will be made Caliph after him. Is this true?" Ali had emphatically said, "This is utterly wrong. I can never tell a lie about the Prophet. Had he said so, how could I have allowed Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman to become the Caliph and give my allegiance to them?" How could anybody now make such statements? Yet, we hear it from those who are called religious scholars and pious Muslims. From Adam to the Day of Judgment, struggle between truth and untruth goes on and will go on. Divine and satanic parties have always been there and they will exist until the Day of Resurrection. This unending fight between right and wrong decides the reward and punishment one will receive in the Hereafter.

Islam teaches moderation and prevents going to the extremes. People have formed extreme views about Ali. One group has degraded him to the lowest level while another one, in opposition to the first one, upgraded him to the position of god. In this respect Ali was put into a position like Isa (Jesus) when the Jews opposed him and went astray, while the Christians lifted him up to the Divine level. But pure and orthodox Muslims walk a middle path neither of the Shiite nor the Khawarij.

As the Companions of the Prophet can not be brought down to the level of the reverend Muslims, sufis and common Muslims of our times,

they also cannot be taken above the human level. They were, after all, humans. They ate and drank and slept like humans. They had other human needs too. Even the Prophet ﷺ claimed his being human and took pride in his position as a slave of Allāh. However, we are very sure of his innocence and of his being perfect in total human virtues and excellence and consider his life and deeds as a guiding light for us all.

The Companions were fortunate enough to watch and emulate his example in letter and spirit. But, since, they were neither Prophets nor innocent, and different from each other in abilities, they had different aspects of human qualities to show. Among them we see Abu Bakr ؓ and Umar ؓ on one hand and Mu'āwiyah ؓ and Mughirah ؓ on the other. They had jurists like Ali ؓ and Aishah ؓ and narrators of *Hadith* like Abu Hurairah ؓ and Ibn Mas'ud ؓ, political activists like Amr bin Al-Ās ؓ and pious persons like Abdullah bin Umar ؓ and Abu Dhar ؓ. Now, if they differ in thoughts, opinions and actions, it is our duty to take these differences as a blessing in disguise and not to fall prey to hasty decisions and thoughtless actions.

Up to 30 AH, twenty years after the death of the Prophet ﷺ, the Muslims kept winning steady victories without loss. These conquests brought to the fold of Islam almost all the civilized countries of the world. From 30 AH to 40 AH, we find almost no Muslim victories and they remained preoccupied with internal problems, bickering, feuds and fighting. Although the decade-long disturbances were apparently injurious to Islam, they had some hidden virtues for the Muslim *Ummah*. The twenty-year long spell of victories were the fruits of spiritual power and the teachings of the Qur'ān, while internal dissensions and disruptions were the direct outcome of a materialistic approach to life. Through death and destruction they learned to live under adverse situations and win peace and progress after losses and reverses.

The fight goes on and will keep going on between good and bad, right and wrong, light and darkness. Whenever materialism gains victory over spiritual power, the two forces are bound to clash with one another. When Musa (Moses) ؑ caught Hārūn (Aaron) ؑ by his beard, when Yusuf (Joseph) ؑ could be thrown into the well by his brothers and sold for a few coins, the differences among various sections of the Companions must not be looked upon with amazement.

What took place between Ali ؑ and Mu'āwiyah ؑ, left a deep scar on the face of Islam. It has been serving the Muslims as a lesson to learn from and to take care about since that time. Conflict between Banu Umayyah and Banu Abbās, campaigns of the Ghaznawid and the Ghorid against one another and the power struggles between rival Muslim rulers throughout history have inflicted heavy losses in men and materials but Islam is flexible enough to sustain these onslaughts and rise again from the dust.

These ups and downs in Muslim life and character and power have always been among the wonders of history. When Halāku (the son of Ghengis Khan) ravaged Baghdad, it led to his progeny converting to Islam. When the united Christian forces wrested Palestine from the Muslims, Salahuddin Ayubi appeared on the scene and restored the sacred land to the Muslim *Ummah*.

We find contrast in all the facets of the world. Islamic caliphate or Islamic rule was in all respects a blessing for mankind. But it was not spared the onslaught of decline and fall.

Readers of history are not pleased over the emergence of hypocrites during the caliphate of Uthmān ؑ and opponents make an attempt to hold Islam responsible for this. But dark forces have always been there to fight the forces of light and virtue and they have, more than once, attained temporary success in their nefarious plans. These forces raised their heads with the martyrdom of Umar Fāruq ؑ and have been raging against Islam since then.

## **Hasan** ﷺ

### **Physical Features and Pedigree:**

Hasan bin Ali bin Abu Tālib ﷺ was the last of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. He was born in the middle of Sha'bān 3 AH. He resembled the Prophet ﷺ who named him Hasan. Nobody had this name during the Age of Ignorance. Imam Bukhari reports from Abu Bakr ﷺ, "The Prophet ﷺ was once sitting on the pulpit with Hasan beside him. He would sometimes look towards the audience and at times at Hasan and said: 'This son of mine is the chief of the people and will make peace between two factions of the Muslims'." The Prophet ﷺ was once going somewhere with Hasan ﷺ on his shoulder. A man came across and remarked addressing Hasan ﷺ, "What a good mount you have got." At this the Prophet ﷺ replied "Even the rider is very good." Abdullah bin Zubair ﷺ is reported to have said, "Hasan resembled the Prophet ﷺ very much and he loved him dearly."

### **Praiseworthy Traits:**

Hasan ﷺ was very polite and generous and commanded high respect. He had a great dislike for disturbance and bloodshed. He performed Hajj twenty-five times on foot although he had his camel with him. Umair bin Ishāq says, "Hasan alone is the person whom I love to hear speaking. And I never heard him using foul language."

When Marwān bin Al-Hakam was the governor of Al-Madinah and Hasan ﷺ had also shifted to Al-Madinah after quitting his caliphate, he once sent someone to tell Hasan ﷺ, "You are like a mule (Allāh forbid), that when it is asked about its father it says my mother was a mare." While sending his reply, he said, "I shall never forget that you abuse me without any reason. We have ultimately to go before Allāh the Almighty. So, if you are true in what you say, Allāh the Almighty will give you reward for that; in case you are a liar, Allāh the Almighty is the Greatest Avenger of all." Jarir bin Asma' relates, "When Hasan passed away, Marwān burst into tears at his funeral bier. When Husain ﷺ said to him, 'You now weep over him although



you kept annoying him during his lifetime." Marwân replied, "Do you know I could only do so with a person who was more tolerant than a mountain." Ali bin Zaid ؓ relates, "Hasan gave away as charity in the way of Allâh all his goods and chattels twice and gave half three times." He would divorce women most frequently except one who began to love him. At last Ali ؓ had to ask the people of Kufah not to give their daughters to him in marriage. But Hamadân said, "How can it be that we refuse to give our daughters to him in marriage." Someone mentioned before Hasan ؓ that Abu Dhar ؓ used to say, "I hold dear poverty more than opulence and sickness more than health." Thereupon he remarked, "May Allâh show him mercy. As for me, I leave myself totally in the Hand of Allâh without desiring anything; He will do what He likes; I dare not interfere in His Decisions."

He handed over the caliphate to Mu'âwiyah ؓ in Rabi' Al-Awwal 41 AH. When his friends called him 'Âr-ul-Muslimin', he would say, "Âr (shame) is better than Nâr (Hell)." When a person addressed him, "O the disgracer of the Muslims. I salute you!" he answered back, "I am not the disgracer of the Muslims; I simply thought not to sacrifice you for the country." Jubair bin Nufair relates that he once said to Hasan ؓ, "It is in the air that you have once again developed a desire for the caliphate." He replied "When the heads of the Arabs lay in my hands and I could do with them as I liked, I gave it up to seek the Pleasure of Allâh, now am I expected to undo this merely to please the people of the Hijâz?" He died in the month of Rabi' Al-Awwal 50 AH. They suspect that he was poisoned to death. When Husain pressed ؓ him to tell the name of the one who gave him poison, he answered saying, "If the suspect has poisoned me, Allâh the Almighty will take severe revenge, otherwise why should one be unjustifiably killed for me."

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### **Mentionable Events during the Caliphate of Hasan ؓ**

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When Ali ؓ was asked on the eve of his death whether Bai'ah may be taken at the hands of Hasan ؓ, he had said in plain words, "At present I am involved in my own personal affairs so you do this with whoever you like." They took it to be his indication in favor of Hasan

and he was, therefore, chosen for the post. Qais bin Sa'd bin Ubadah was the first to take *Bai'ah* followed by others. At the time of taking *Bai'ah*, Hasan kept asking the people to admit: "Act according to what I say; fight with whom I fight and make peace with whom I enter into peace."

When Mu'awiyah came to know of the martyrdom of Ali, he adopted the appellation of *Amir-ul-Mu'minin* (Chief of the believers). Although he had obtained from the Syrians *Bai'ah* for his caliphate following the decision of the arbitrators, he had it renewed. When Qais bin Sa'd was taking *Bai'ah* at the hand of Hasan, he had uttered, "I take *Bai'ah* at your hand to follow the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh and on waging *Jihād*." Thereupon Hasan said, "*Jihād* and fighting form an integral part of the Book of Allāh and *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allāh, they need not, therefore, be mentioned separately." Hasan's expression gave rise to speculation among the people of Kufah that he was disinclined to fight.

Mu'awiyah, on the other hand, set out towards Kufah at the head of sixty thousand men and sent a message to Hasan, "Peace is better than war, and it is proper for you to accept me as Caliph and take *Bai'ah* at my hand." When he understood that Mu'awiyah had taking Kufah in mind, he left Kufah at the head of forty thousand troops and sent Qais bin Sa'd as vanguard with twelve thousand fighters. When he reached Madā'in, someone spread the rumor that Qais bin Sa'd was killed. Hasan halted there for a day to give rest to the animals. He assembled his people and addressed them after praising Allāh the Almighty: "People! You have taken *Bai'ah* at my hand that you will obey me in war and peace. I say, by my oath to Allāh the Exalted, that I harbor enmity against none, from the East to the West there is none whom I hate or detest, I am one who prefers unity, consensus, love and security to disunity, discord and enmity."

### **Verdict of Disbelief against Hasan**

Having heard this speech, the Khawārij and the hypocrites spread the rumor in the camp that Hasan wanted to enter into peace with Mu'awiyah, and they issued a verdict of blasphemy against him.

The verdict stirred the military camp. Opinion was divided between his being a believer or a disbeliever. Very soon the faction charging him with blasphemy dominated the scene and started making their opponents victims of excesses of all kinds.

Many of them once entered the camp and surrounded Hasan ؓ on all sides calling him a disbeliever. They pulled his garments so violently that they were torn into pieces. They also took away the mantle from his shoulder and plundered the camp. Following this, Hasan ؓ hurried to the Rabi'ah and Hamadân clans on horseback and called on them for help as they were his supporters. They helped him without delay and removed the detractors from the camp.

He left for Madâ'in afterwards. Jarrâh bin Qabisah, a man from the Khawârij, struck him with his spear and injured his thigh. He was brought into the white palace of Madâ'in where he stayed and recovered his health. Qais bin Sa'd ؓ sent as the vanguard at the head of twelve thousand troops, was surrounded by Mu'âwiyah ؓ at Anbâr. He then sent Abdullah bin Âmir to Hasan ؓ on a peace mission at the head of the vanguard. After the trouble in his camp, Hasan ؓ had sent Abdullah bin Hârith bin Naufal to Mu'âwiyah ؓ for peace talk.

On being informed that Abdullah bin Âmir had reached a little distance from Madâ'in at the head of a detachment, Hasan ؓ came out of Madâ'in with his army. When Abdullah bin Âmir noticed troops coming from the opposite direction, he drew near and called out the people of Iraq aloud and said, "I have not come here for the sake of fighting. I am leading the vanguard of Mu'âwiyah ؓ who is halting at Anbâr with a big army. You convey my salutation to Hasan ؓ and tell him that Abdullah requests you by Allâh to stop fighting and save the people from death and destruction."

When Hasan ؓ heard this, he came back to Madâ'in and sent his message to Abdullah that he was ready to make peace with Mu'âwiyah ؓ and quit his office of the caliphate in his favor on condition that he would stick to the Book and the *Sunnah* and hold back from getting in the way of his opponents by setting aside past activities and grant safety of life and property to his (Hasan's) supporters.

Abdullah bin Âmir rushed to Mu'âwiyah with these conditions and told him that Hasan was ready to quit his post on certain conditions. On being asked about the conditions, he said to Mu'âwiyah, "The first condition is that the caliphate will be restored to him on your death. Secondly, an annual amount of five hundred thousand from the public treasury will be paid to him while you are alive. Thirdly, he will collect the tribute from Ahwâz and the Persian territories."

These three rather hard conditions were the making of Abdullah's own mind. Following these he placed before Mu'âwiyah the conditions, which were actually put forward by Hasan. Mu'âwiyah very eagerly agreed to all and more than that. He is reported to have said, "Hasan's intention appears fair and he seems to bring peace between two factions of the Muslims." With this remark Mu'âwiyah put down his signature on a blank piece of paper and asked Abdullah bin Âmir to take that to Hasan to write down all his conditions to be fulfilled by me.

When Husain and Abdullah bin Ja'far, came to know of this development, they approached Hasan and tried to hold him back from the implementation of his plan. But Hasan declined their advice. He had watched the activities of the people of Iraq and Kufah from the time of Ali. He was conscious of Mu'âwiyah's abilities in running the administration of his territories and skill in statecraft. Therefore, he remained firm in his determination to accept the peace offer.

## **Peace Treaty**

When Hasan saw the signed and stamped paper brought by Abdullah bin Âmir from Mu'âwiyah, he objected to the condition that the caliphate would be restored to him after the demise of Mu'âwiyah. He said, "I strongly dislike the condition of my being chosen Caliph after Mu'âwiyah, if I had a longing for the caliphate, why should I quit it now." Following this he sent for the scribe and asked him to write the peace document in the following words:

"This peace document is being written between Hasan bin Ali bin Abu Tâlib and Mu'âwiyah bin Abu Sufyân. Both of them

agree on the following:

The office of the caliphate is handed over to Mu'āwiyah bin Abu Sufyān. The Muslims will be at liberty to elect a Caliph of their own choice after Mu'āwiyah. The Muslims as a whole will remain safe from the hands and tongue of Mu'āwiyah and he will treat all with grace. He will not stand in the way of Ali's relatives, and the supporter's of Hasan and Husain bin Ali will not suffer at his hands. Both these brothers and their relatives will be free to go anywhere and settle at any place. Mu'āwiyah and his governors will not have the right to force them to carry out their orders by treating them as their subjects. Mu'āwiyah is bound to keep sending the tribute from Ahwāz to Hasan bin Ali, and the entire existing possessions of the public treasury of Kufah will be within the rights of Hasan bin Ali and he will be free to spend it at will. Mu'āwiyah should prefer Banu Hāshim in giving gifts and rewards."

Some important people signed the document like Abdullah bin Al-Hārith bin Naufal and Amr bin Abu Salamah and others as witness and surety. When the document was placed before Mu'āwiyah ﷺ, he expressed his utmost joy over it. In the wake of this peace treaty, Mu'āwiyah ﷺ raised his siege and left Qais bin Sa'd ﷺ free. Mu'āwiyah ﷺ then reached the Grand Mosque of Kufah and took *Bai'ah* from Hasan ﷺ and the people of Kufah. But Sa'd bin Qais ﷺ remained absent from the mosque. Mu'āwiyah ﷺ also sent him a piece of signed and stamped paper asking him to put down his own conditions for taking *Bai'ah*, which would be totally accepted. He demanded security of his life and those of his supporters without asking for anything else. Mu'āwiyah ﷺ conceded to it at once. Thereupon he and his comrades came and took *Bai'ah*.

Husain ﷺ refused to take *Bai'ah*. When Mu'āwiyah ﷺ pressed for it, Hasan ﷺ told him not to insist, for his pride was dearer to him than taking *Bai'ah*. Mu'āwiyah ﷺ kept silent. But Husain ﷺ took *Bai'ah* later. Amr bin Al-Ās ﷺ was present on that occasion. He advised Mu'āwiyah ﷺ to request Hasan ﷺ to deliver his address before the audience. Mu'āwiyah ﷺ liked the advice and in response to his request Hasan ﷺ said addressing the people: "O Muslims! To me mischief is

highly detestable. I made peace with Mu'āwiyah to save the Ummah of my grandfather from tribulations and disturbances and accepted him as commander and Caliph. Had the command and caliphate been his right, he has got it; if it was mine, I bestowed it on him."

### **Prophecy of the Prophet ﷺ**

Following the process of establishing this peace treaty through all the stages, one can marvel at the accuracy of the prophecy of the Prophet ﷺ about Hasan ؓ: "This son of mine is a chief and Allāh the Almighty will bring about peace between two groups of the Muslims through him." When Hasan ؓ descended from the pulpit, Mu'āwiyah ؓ got up and said "Abu Muhammad! You have shown such a boldness and bravery the like of which nobody has seen so far."

This peace treaty was signed in 41 AH, only six months after the martyrdom of Ali ؓ, that is why this year is named as 'Ām-ul-Jamā'at.

After the finalization of peace, Mu'āwiyah ؓ left Kufah for Damascus. He showed high regard for Hasan ؓ while he remained alive and kept sending him the amount agreed upon. In the wake of Mu'āwiyah's departure from Kufah, the people indulged in complaining against sending tribute to Hasan ؓ from the Ahwāz province. Thereupon Hasan ؓ assembled the people and said addressing them: "O the people of Iraq! I have repeatedly forgiven you. You martyred my father, plundered my house, and injured me with your lance. You keep in mind the two kinds of persons killed, one killed in Siffin and another one killed demanding revenge for those killed in Naharwān. What Mu'āwiyah has done with you is not anything honorable for you and this is quite justified. Thus, if you agree to die, I am ready to abrogate the peace treaty and seek justice through the sword. But, in case you hold your lives dear, I shall stick to this peace treaty."

Hearing this they pressed him to keep the peace treaty. Since he was well aware of their ignorance and lack of courage, he corrected the Kufis by simply administering a threat. Mu'āwiyah ؓ had now risen as the unchallenged leader and Caliph of Islam. Even Sa'd bin Abu Waqqās ؓ who had relieved himself of all the affairs of life and was

passing his days grazing his camels and goats and worshiping Allāh in a state of seclusion, had also taken *Bai'ah* at the hand of Mu'awiyah ؓ. In short, none was there to hold himself back from taking *Bai'ah* sooner or later. A few days after the peace treaty was signed, Hasan ؓ left Kufah and proceeded to Al-Madinah along with his relatives. The people of Kufah escorted him for some distance. From Al-Madinah he went nowhere to settle.

### **Concocted Story of poisoning**

He died in 50 or 51 AH. It is said that his wife Ju'dah bint Al-Ash'ath poisoned him. However, Hasan ؓ and Husain ؓ could not detect the culprit, so how can she be blamed for this event? On the eve of his death, Hasan ؓ called Husain ؓ and said, "The caliphate reached Ali after the Prophet ﷺ and swords were drawn but the issue remained unsettled. I have now come to know it very well that Prophethood and caliphate cannot remain combined in our family. I am afraid the ignorant of Kufah will try to take you out of this city but you should foil their attempt. I had once requested Aishah to allow me to be buried near the Prophet ﷺ. She had then agreed. Maybe, she will refuse permission now. However, approach her for this purpose but without insistence." Following this advice Husain ؓ contacted Aishah ؓ immediately after the demise of Hasan ؓ and sought permission for his brother's burial and she gave her consent. But Marwān stood in the way. Husain ؓ and his comrades proceeded towards him armed with their weapons but Abu Hurairah ؓ intervened to save the situation. Hasan ؓ was then laid to rest beside his mother, Fātimah ؓ. Nine sons and six daughters survived him.

### **A Glance at Hasan's Caliphate**

Some historians are reluctant to accept the six-month caliphate of Hasan ؓ as a part of the Rightly-Guided Caliphate on the plea of its being short-lived and incomplete. However, this viewpoint appears to be untenable. Should this argument be considered as acceptable, Ali's caliphate will also have to be erased from the hierarchy of the Righteous Caliphs, which is not justified. The shortness of his tenure is also not a valid reason. If the caliphate of Hasan ؓ is carefully

taken into consideration, it is an important part of the Rightly-Guided Caliphate. Even though the caliphate of Hasan ؓ is devoid of victories and cries of battles, it performed such a remarkable and magnificent service to the world of Islam and its unity that a caliphate spreading over scores of years and with a hundred victories could not have accomplished. In respect of the marvelous role played by him in bringing unity to the two warring groups of the Muslim *Ummah*, his caliphate is unforgettable.

He put an end to the enmity of a decade in a stroke. He destroyed the conspiracies and mischief of the hypocrites and Jews in the garb of Muslims developed through a decade and grown strong and formidable. In this way he paved the way for future victories and the swords of the Muslim *Ummah* turned once again towards the enemies of Islam. He certainly surpassed the bravery of a great warrior with many victories when taking *Bai'ah* at the hand of Mu'awiyah ؓ, he said: "Had the command and caliphate been his right, he has got it; if it was mine, I bestowed it on him."

This remarkable event will serve to the Last Day as a guiding light for the Muslim *Ummah* to keep to the right path. This glittering example stands to this day as a lighthouse in the wild and fathomless dark ocean. Hasan ؓ had under his command forty thousand fighters. They might have been unsteady, ignorant and impertinent, but all of them had taken the oath of fighting against Mu'awiyah ؓ to the last drop of their blood. In such a situation it was a must for a young man of 37, an experienced general and the son of a brave father to fight against his father's rival. Hasan ؓ knew it well that he, being the darling of the Prophet ﷺ, would be able in a short period, to turn the tide of the Companions and the world of Islam in his favor.

### **Few Sentences about the Guided Caliphate**

The main difference between the Rightly-Guided Caliphate and that of Banu Umayyah and others lies in the fact that every Caliph of the Guided Caliphate was elected by a team of the men of sound judgment. Even the nominated Caliph had the approval and support of the majority of judicious persons. And such a nomination or election had nothing to do with ancestral rights. But with the end of



this era ended this basic principle.

During the Rightly-Guided Caliphate, the Muslim *Ummah* as a whole had every right to know about the state of affairs, to raise objections and to advance its own reasons and opinions, but this practice was abolished during the later caliphates.

During the Rightly-Guided Caliphate, the Caliphs practiced the utmost simplicity with regard to their clothes, dwellings, food, and mounts. They lived in the company of the common people and had no air of superiority nor demanded any preferential treatment from the public.

During the Rightly-Guided Caliphate, the Caliph was not allowed to spend even a penny from the public treasury on himself or friends and relatives. Afterwards, they became the custodians of the treasury and nobody could raise an objection against their lavish spending.

The Rightly-Guided Caliphs were all from among the exalted Companions and had the honor of joining the blessed company of the Prophet ﷺ. During the latter caliphates there was none from the Companions except Mu'awiyah and Abdullah bin Zubair.

The Righteous Caliphs belonged to the blessed category who had been given the good news of going to Paradise during their lifetime, afterwards there was none from this blessed and exclusive group.

They were those who showed affection to the Muslims like their own children and did not treat them like their slaves. But later caliphates rose in the pattern of Caesar and Chosroes.

The Rightly-Guided Caliphs were not despotic. In religious matters too they could not act on their own. Whenever any doubt or difference raised its head, they would seek advice from the distinguished Companions and acted according to the example set by the Prophet ﷺ. In case any of their decisions proved wrong at a later stage, they put them right when the mistake was brought to their knowledge. The fundamental principle governing their policies and programs, in religious and temporal matters, rose from the Divine law. Enforcement of Divine injunctions and establishing peace and order were some of the duties, which were essentially expected of them. Their people had full freedom of thought and action.

Everybody had as his birthright, the right to ask for an explanation from the Caliph even in matters small and unimportant. A unique feature of the caliphate was that the Caliph needed no force to enforce his laws because everyone was ready and eager to follow the laws on his own. It proves beyond doubt that their caliphates were based on love and faith and not on pressure and atrocities. During the latter caliphates, the task of enforcement of Divine laws were left to the religious scholars and *Qâdis* (court judges) and men with religious training were appointed to address the people and lead them in prayer. However, the caliphs had an army and the finance in their hands to rule according to their wishes. Gradually their caliphates changed into despotic regimes. Thus fear, terror, excesses and atrocities spread throughout the land and public freedom was forfeited.

The Rightly-Guided Caliphs gave priority to public welfare. Upholding the Word of Allâh and enforcement of the Divine injunctions were the two things they were very eager to execute, but they had no lust for territorial aggrandizement.

It was not their practice to store collections and spoils of battles in the public treasury; they distributed everything among the Muslims or spent it on Muslim welfare works. They were in the habit of sweeping up the public treasury after spending all the possessions on public projects and welfare schemes. But the latter caliphate worked on contrary lines.

The Rightly-Guided Caliphs would perform *Hajj* without fail, besides performing *Hajj*, they took the opportunity to fulfill their duties to the people and also gave them a forum for redressing their problems. They managed to meet people from the various Muslim territories, heard their complaints and examined the merits and demerits of the related governors and mitigated their sufferings. In case they were preoccupied with some urgent work in the capital, they sent their substitute to do the job but the latter caliphates deviated from this practice.

The Rightly-Guided Caliphs led prayers and addressed the congregations in the Grand Mosque of the capital. Later on only the caliphs from Banu Umayyah maintained this practice.

During the Rightly-Guided Caliphates there was no trace of factionalism and they solved their differences, if any, in the light of the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet of Allāh.

The Rightly-Guided Caliphates had no consideration for relations, friendship, nationality and region in comparison with religion and *Shari'at*. When we examine their methods of doing things, we find the least care and almost no concession even for close relatives like father, brother or son. Freedom of expression was practiced to such an extent that an ordinary person had the courage to interrupt a caliph during his address from the pulpit. But this freedom was strangled later on.

They never took themselves as kings but servants of the Muslims. They served the Muslims like their shepherd and watchmen and looked after their welfare. But the slightest mistake or doubt about the speech and action of the caliphs attracted severe criticism from the public.

The first volume, which is coming to a close, contains an abridged history of the Rightly-Guided Caliphate. Ten Muslims from among the Companions had been given glad tidings of Paradise by the Prophet ﷺ even during their lifetime. They are known as '*Ashrah Mubassshirah* (the Blessed Ten). Among them are Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthmān, Ali, Abdur-Rahmān bin Auf, Talhah, Zubair, Sa'd bin Waqqās, Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrāh and Saeed bin Zaid ؓ. All but the last one have found mention in some chapter of our account. So a few lines about Saeed bin Zaid ؓ seem proper and relevant.

### **Saeed bin Zaid ؓ**

He was cousin and brother-in-law of Umar ؓ. His pedigree is like this: Saeed bin Zaid bin Amr bin Nufail bin Abdullah bin Qart bin Rabāh bin Adi. He joined the Prophet ﷺ in all the battles except the battle of Badr. But the Prophet ﷺ gave him a share from the booty of Badr and counted him among the Companions of Badr. He died in 51 AH, at the age of 72.

Once a woman lodged a complaint against him in regard to a piece of land. He cursed her with blindness in case she was a liar. She turned blind and fell into a well and died. Once he heard some unkind words

against Ali ؑ in the Grand Mosque of Kufah and remarked, "Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthmân, Ali, Talhah, Zubair, Abu Ubaidah, Sa'd bin Abu Waqqâs, Abdur-Rahmân bin Auf, these nine are among the Blessed Ten." "Who is the tenth one?" the person inquired. But Saeed ؑ kept silent, on repeated insistence, he revealed, "I am the tenth one."

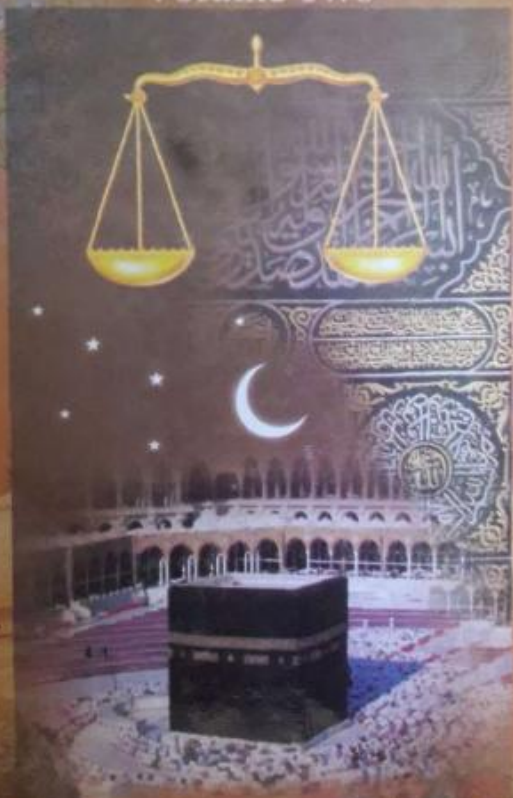
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[FIRST VOLUME]

Maktab-e-Ashraf

# The History of **ISLAM**

Volume Two



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By: **Akbar Shah Najeebabadi**

Revised by: **Safi-ur-Rahman Mubarakpuri**

# **The History of Islam**

(Volume Two)

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## Publishers Note

We are presenting before you the second volume of the book *History of Islam*. This book was originally written in the Urdu language in 1922 (1343 AH) by Akbar Shah Khan Najeebabadi. This was the time about 25 years before the partition of Indian Subcontinent into Pakistan and India. For the purpose of brevity, the compiler has presented the authentic events in concise form from the famous histories of Islam written in the Arabic and Persian languages by the great Muslim historians like Tabari, Ibn Athir, Mas'udi, Abul-Fida', Ibn Khaldun and Suyuti, apart from getting benefited from the authentic books of *Ahadiith* for the compilation of the part about the biography of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. So, this compilation is actually the extract of the works of the famous Muslim historians.

First volume of this book was heartily greeted by the readers. Now we are proud to present the second volume. In the first volume, starting with the introduction of the history as a subject, the country, people and conditions of Arabia prior to the advent of Islam were discussed, and an account of the life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was presented including the hardships and opposition he faced while propagating the message of Islam, and the details of migration and the period after it until his death. After that the description of Rightly Guided Caliphate was also discussed in its full perspective.

In this second volume, starting with the Caliphate of Banu Umayyah, the martyrdom of Imam Husain ؑ, and the Caliphate of the Abbasids, all areas have been covered as far as the expansion of Islam was.

We hope that the readers will find this volume also of great help in the study of Islamic history. The famous scholar Safi-ur-Rahman Mubarakpuri has revised the Urdu edition before its translation to check the authenticity aspect.

The translation was done by the Translation Department of Darussalam, and every care has been taken to reproduce the events and the names of the persons and places as accurately as possible. We thank all the persons who have cooperated with us to complete this task and produce it before you into a presentable form. May Allāh accept our humble efforts in this regard and send His peace and blessings on our Prophet Muhammad, his Companions and his followers. — *Amin!*

**Abdul Malik Mujahid**  
General Manager  
Darussalam



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## Chapter 1

# **Caliphate of Banu Umayyah** (First Phase)

After the Khilafat Rashida, (the rightly guided caliphate) we now begin with the Caliphate of Banu Umayyah. In the Khilafat ar-Rashida, the first two caliphs were neither from Banu Umayyah nor from Banu Hashim. The period of these two rightly guided Caliphs was the best. The third was related to the family of Banu Umayyah and the fourth to Banu Hashim. In the second half of the Khilafat ar-Rashida, the caliphs of both Banu Umayyah and Banu Hashim remained on the throne. The second half compared to the first half may be called a period of failure though it was certainly better than the caliphates that followed because the Prophet's companions were the rulers and most of his companions were still alive.

Islam came into the world to wipe out *Shirk*, (partnership with Allah) and establish *Tawhid*, oneness of Allāh. The Prophet (ﷺ) showed mankind what is perfect *Tawhid* and the way to real success. There can be no harm or loss greater than *Shirk* and no felicity and success greater than *Tawhid*. *Shirk*, in fact, is the name of injustice and oppression. That is why the noble Quran calls it the greatest of

injustices. What can be a bigger injustice than the fact that man should regard as his Maker, all the helpless beings that are themselves Allah's creations and slaves? Only that person can commit *Shirk* who wants to lead a life of injustice. The greatest thing that compels a man to embrace injustice is ignorance coupled with unjustified love, which in Quranic phraseology we call darkness and loss of the right path. In unjustified and uncalled for love for elders of our families and tribes we accord unjust veneration of their, pictures, statues and graves and these are the chief reasons that lead to the prevalence of *Shirk* in the world. It is through this that mankind has forgotten its Creator and fell into a death-pit. The Prophet (ﷺ) wiped out all the possibilities of *Shirk*, he also saved mankind from unjustified family prejudice and love that takes mankind away from justice and impartiality. The second thing that compels and has been compelling mankind to suffer from this greatest injustice is unjustified pride. This is the very thing that turned Iblis into *Satan*, the rejected one and it is through this that he has been able to seduce most people from the right path and put them on the way to destruction. When this unjustified pride joins hands with unjustified love, a very powerful formula for destruction is prepared for mankind. In order to do away with this source of *Shirk* the Prophet (ﷺ) on the day of the conquest of Makkah, stood at the door of the Ka'bah and addressed the inhabitants of Makkah and those who were influential among the Arabs.

"O the tribe of Quraish! Allah did away with your vanity of the age of ignorance and your pride in your ancestors. All men are the offspring of Adam and Adam was made of clay. Allah says, O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you." (*Ibn Hisham* 4:60)

Putting an end to racial and tribal pride was in reality closing the avenues to *Shirk* and creating the capacity for *Tawhid*. Also, there is no denying the existence of tribes and nations and their distinctions but greatness is not connected with race and family. Greatness and superiority is connected with the recognition and fear of Allah. Everybody who becomes pious deserves to be blessed and every

member of a tribe earns debasement for his and her misdeeds. By setting people on the right and straight path, the Prophet (ﷺ) delivered them to success in both the worlds and felicity for mankind. In the first half of the Khilafat ar-Rashida, the Muslims had nothing to do with the renounced sources of deviation and forgot family intolerance Quraish used to address Bilal the Habashi (Ethiopian) as 'Sayyadi' (my chief) and regarded him as more honored than themselves by virtue of his good deeds. The wisdom in sending the *Muhajirin* and Ansars of noble families under the command of Osama bin Zaid (رضي الله عنه) was that nobody should harbor the thought in his heart that a man could be honored by virtue of nation, race or family. Had the crown and caliphate been the prerogative of a particular tribe and family, the Prophet (ﷺ) would not have sent anybody other than Banu Hashim as administrators to the provinces and territories and as commanders of the armed forces but he rarely did so. He always took care to bestow leadership and governorship strictly on the basis of merit. He did not consider anyone worthy of such a position based on one's relation to a particular family, or tribe. That was why even slaves could become leaders over the elders in Quraish and be given command the armed forces nothing there than his would have been expected of the perfect teacher who preached pure *Tawhid*.

There had been a historical rivalry between Banu Umayyah and Banu Hashim as both tried to excel each other. That was probably why Banu Umayyah first opposed the Prophet (ﷺ), who belonged to the tribe of Banu Hashim, vehemently and Banu Hashim supported him more. When the Polytheists, those who make partners with Allah, were totally wiped out from the Arab and the opposing atheists of both tribes were slain or the fortunate ones embraced Islam, there were a good number of courageous and meritorious people in the newly converted Banu Umayyah. The Prophet (ﷺ) honored their capabilities. At the time of the conquest of Makkah by equating Abu Sufyan's house with the Ka'bah in connection to protection, he pleased them. Uthman bin Affan (رضي الله عنه) who came from Banu Umayyah and who was the Prophet's son-in-law, Ba'it ar-Ridwan was taken for him. Um ul-Muminin Um Habiba (رضي الله عنه) also belonged to the Banu Umayyah tribe, she was Abu Sufyan's daughter and Muawiya's sister. The Prophet (ﷺ) appointed Abu Sufyan (رضي الله عنه) the ruler of Najran.

He made Uthman bin Abul-Aas (رضي الله عنه) who was Uthman bin Affan's uncle, the governor of Taif and the adjoining areas. Umar Farooq (رضي الله عنه) made him governor of Oman and Bahrain. Attab bin Usaid (رضي الله عنه), the grandson of Abu Sufyan's uncle Abul-Aas, who became a Muslim on the day of the victory of Makkah was appointed the ruler of Makkah. Khalid bin Sayeed, the grandson of Abu Sufyan's uncle, was made the administrator of Yemen. He became a martyr in the battle of Yarmuk. Similarly, the Prophet (ﷺ) appointed Uthman bin Sayeed the governor of Khaibar and his brother Aban the ruler of Bahrain. Had the Prophet (ﷺ) an iota of the old rivalry between Banu Umayyah and Banu Hashim and preferred the racial and family relations to personal qualification, he would not have made these people of Banu Umayyah the administrators of these provinces.

He never chose racial discrimination to individual excellence. Yes, he admitted to tribal preferences but it was confined only to those families, which were known for their managing and leading capabilities due to the experience and training that the members of those specific tribes were exposed to. For management and commander ship, he selected the capable and qualified persons from among these families. Islam had put an end to the traditional rivalry that existed between Banu Umayyah and Banu Hashim. Therefore, it was appropriate that they should not have been put in the position to partake in the Caliphate for some time so that they would not be able to revive their old competitive rivalry. The Prophet (ﷺ) realized this danger fully, which was indicated by his making Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه the Imam of the Salat so that he would be made the caliph after the Prophet's death. The group of Sahabas (Companions of the Prophet ﷺ) who had discernment and understanding, acted upon it whole heartedly. Similarly, Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه appointed as his successor after him the man who was superior to all others in merit and belonged to neither both the tribes. In the same way if after Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه, Abu Obeida bin Al-Jarrah رضي الله عنه or Salim Maula Hudhaifa رضي الله عنه had been made the caliph as Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه himself wanted, then this dormant rivalry would not have come to life again. But these two noblemen had died much earlier than Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه. Again, if any of the six members of the



Shura (council) chosen by Umar bin Khattab رضى الله عنه to pick his successor had maintained this principle by selecting one from among themselves that did not belong to either both tribes to be made caliph, it would have been possible that the future dangers might have been averted and at least both these tribes would not have recalled their forgotten rivalry. If Ali bin Abi Talib رضى الله عنه had been made the caliph after Umar bin Khattab رضى الله عنه there was every possibility that this extinguished fire would not have reignited. This is because Ali bin Abi Talib رضى الله عنه was not expected to have made so much extraordinary and sensitive allowances for Banu Hashim as Uthman bin Affan رضى الله عنه made in favor of Banu Umayyah. However, we should have faith that whatever happened was strictly in accordance with the dictates of Allâh and was the destiny that He decreed. We have nothing at our disposal to prefer our presumed resolution that did not actually occur to the results of events that really took place. The most that we can say is that the rebirth and prolongation of the systematic rivalry between Banu Hashim and Banu Umayyah during the Islamic era was extremely harmful for Islâm. Those today who want to see this rivalry maintained and consider the connection with a particular family or tribe as a necessary qualification for the post of caliph are increasingly proving themselves as enemies of and harmful to Islâm.

Banu Umayyah by virtue of their personal merit, were regarded as an integral part of the Islamic caliphate. After the appointment of Uthman bin Affan رضى الله عنه as the caliph, Banu Umayyah took advantage of his mild nature and Marwan bin Al-Hakam's remaining in authority, increased their power and influence so much that they overwhelmed the entire Islamic World and were occupied with maneuvering to establish their leadership over the Arab world which they previously could not have done in view of the stiff opposition they faced during the days of Ignorance. The martyrdom of Uthman bin Affan رضى الله عنه and the conspiracy hatched by the *Munafiqin* and the Jews posing as Muslims helped them establish their control even more. Ali bin Abi Talib رضى الله عنه had to face greater difficulties during his rule for the simple reason that he was from Banu Hashim. The rivalry between Banu Hashim and Banu Umayyah was constantly before the eyes of the whole Arab world. They attributed all attempts made by Ali

bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه against Muawiya رضي الله عنه and Banu Umayyah to these rivalries and did not cooperate with him because they did not like to participate in reviving the old rivalries between these two tribes. Had there been a non-Hashmite as caliph instead of Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه he would have gotten more help from the Arab tribes. Had Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه himself not been the caliph he would have done better in opposing Muawiya رضي الله عنه and crushing Banu Umayyah and would have found himself more powerful and effective in establishing the caliphate of one who was not a Hashimite.

At this moment, we recollect involuntarily the last words of Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه which he uttered as a last testament to Imam Husain رضي الله عنه at the time of his death.

"When Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه became caliph after the Prophet's ﷺ death, swords came out of their sheaths and this issue remained unsettled and now I know it full well that Prophethood and the caliphate cannot co-exist in our family."

The future, which has now passed into the past, has put its seal of truth on these true words of Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه. After the rightly guided Caliphs, Banu Umayyah made Damascus its capital and ruled over the whole Islamic world for about ninety years. For several hundred years, their caliphate and rule continued in Spain. The rule by Banu Abbas family in Baghdad lasted for more than five hundred years. Banu Abbas are Banu Hashim, no doubt, but they are the descendants of the prophet's uncle and not the descendants of the Prophet's daughter. In other words, Sadat (Arabic plural of the word Sayed which is a title of respect and is also used to refer to the Prophet's descendants) can by taken as belonging to the Prophet's family because the Prophet's blood through Fatima bint Muhammad ﷺ is present. As there is no mixing of the Prophet's blood in the Abbasids, they cannot be taken as belonging to his descendants. A ruling family in Egypt claimed to be called Fatimid; but research scholars found its claim to be false. In India, there was a family that called themselves Sadat. But it is an open secret that Khidr Khan, the ruler of Multan, who was its first ancestor, was by no means a Sayed. The cause of his being known as a Sayed was simply because a mystic saint addressed him as Sayed, which is also a title of respect. Even

today, people address the Mughal and Pathan (tribe in Mangols) chiefs as "Sayed." In short, no one has been able to found a free government and kingship of Sadat of significance in any country so far. This is the one reality before us. When we recall the last words of Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه our hearts are unconsciously overawed by the grand truth and magnificent utterance of the speaker.

Whatever Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه told his brother Imam Husain رضي الله عنه at the time of his death, was not only his Ijtihad (the pronouncement of the learned when Qur'an, Hadith, and Sunnah have not clarified an issue) or ilham (inspiration) but also that of the entire group of the Prophet's Companions. This was the idea that led the Prophet ﷺ to make a Hashmi neither a permanent ruler of a province nor a free and responsible commander of a large army. Though in the expedition of Mauta the Prophet deputed Jafar bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه as a commander, he made his freed slave Zaid bin Harith his senior. Although, he assigned Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه the work of collecting the Islamic tax in Yemen and that was only for a short time and he gave the post of administrator to Muadh bin Jabl رضي الله عنه and Abu Musa Al-Ashari رضي الله عنه. Similarly Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه and Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه never deputed Banu Hashim on important and responsible posts nor made them rulers of states though these two first caliphs paid great respect to Banu Hashim took care for their likes and dislikes, took *Mashwara* (consul) from them and acted upon it. Umar bin Khattab once said that if they had the power of a ruler along with the honor of Prophethood, they would cause the people to be very submissive and this would make them suffer from tribal pride and thereby kill the real spirit of Islam and they would destroy themselves.

Once he said that whoever led people towards the veneration of the age of Ignorance, he must be slain. Once again he said "If anybody made a man Amir or ruler on the basis of his relation or friendship with him though better persons among the Muslims were available he committed a breach of trust with Allāh, the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslim community.

In brief, this was not only the faith of Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه that the honor of Prophethood is sufficient for the family of the Prophet ﷺ and the honor of the rule should not be linked to it, but this belief was also shared by most of the Sahabas. The truth is that the holy Sadat who

were related to the Prophet's family and who were supposed to end shirk and all its facets from the world, should not hanker after worldly dominion and material prosperity so that they might prove worthy of being the Prophet's progeny. If the Prophet ﷺ had not declared taking Sadaqa (charity) unlawful for the Sadat, we could have expected that they, the family of the Prophet ﷺ deserved to be caliphs and emperors. But this provision for his family is the biggest proof that he had already decided that his family would remain non-attached to worldly riches or perhaps he might have known it from the divine revelation. The forbidding of charity to the family of the Prophet ﷺ is in fact a matter of great pride for the Sadat and it exalts their status to such heights that the other groups of the world, which are related to Islam, can be envious of. Worldly riches and sovereignty are such things which distance man from Allāh. The Holy Qur'ān and Traditions, therefore look down upon them. History tells us that the people despite being in possession of right knowledge could not be persuaded to do good deeds. Only those lucky people who had not much to do with material riches have been honored to protect Islam and such people alone continue to safeguard Islam.

The Prophet ﷺ said, that Islam began with the poor and would last with them. Also, think over this Tradition in which he (ﷺ) has said: "I leave the Qur'ān and my children, Sadat among you."

This Tradition also bears an ample proof of the fact that Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه had declared strictly in accordance with the intention of the tradition, "I know it full well that Prophethood and the caliphate cannot co-exist in our family."

### **Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه**

Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه was born seventeen years before the Hijra, he was junior to Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه by six years. Amir Muawiya's mother Hind bint Utba was first married to Faka bin Mughira Quraishi. Faka once doubted his wife's chastity. He kicked her and ultimately turned her out of his house. That became a topic of discussion among the people. Hind's father Utba asked his daughter, "What is the matter? Tell me clearly. If Faka is justified in accusing you, I shall tell somebody and he will kill him and we shall be saved from dishonor. However, if he is a liar and slandered you unnecessarily,

we shall refer this affair to a soothsayer." Hind swore many times to prove her innocence and refused the allegation absolutely. When Utba was convinced of his daughter's innocence, he compelled Faka bin Mughira to take his tribe Banu Makhzoom with him and go to a soothsayer in Yemen. Similarly Utba bin Rabia too, along with a few persons of Abd al-Manaf, Hind and a friend of hers, set out. They reached the soothsayer and requested him to attend to the affair of those two women.

The soothsayer first went to Hind's friend and striking at her both shoulders said: "Stand up". Then he came to Hind and struck her also, and said "Stand up. You have neither done a bad deed nor committed adultery and you will give birth to a king whose name will be Muawiya." Hearing this Faka caught hold of his wife's hand but the latter pulled away her hand away with a jerk and told him that if she was to give birth to a king, he would not be from his seed. So, after the proof of her impeccability she severed her relation with him. Abu Sufyan bin Harb then married Hind and Muawiya was born.

Abu Sufyan was not more than forty when Muawiya was born. Abu Sufyan was ten years older than the Prophet ﷺ. Right from his childhood Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه had some indications of the future by virtue of which he was called the 'Choro (Kisra) of the Arabs'. He was chiefly known for his wisdom, good management, love of peace and moderation. He was tall, fair complexioned, handsome and strongly built. When the Prophet ﷺ saw him, he said, "This is the Choro (Kisra) of Arabia. The day Muawiya رضى الله عنه leaves the world, you will see that lots of heads will be severed from their bodies." In the last days of his life, Amir Muawiya's belly bulged a little. He used to read the Khutba while sitting on the pulpit. This mode of address of sitting was started by him. He was a well-read man. On the day of the Conquest of Makkah he came with his father, Abu Sufyan, and embraced Islam at the age of twenty five and remained with the Prophet ﷺ until the latter's death. He accompanied him on the expedition of Hunain and the siege of Taif also. After that when the Prophet ﷺ came to Makkah, performed Umara and proceeded to Madinah, Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه Came Madinah and was appointed as one of the recorders of the revelation. Apart from recording the

revelation, he on behalf of the Prophet ﷺ used to entertain and make arrangements for the board and lodging of foreign delegates. After the Prophet's death when Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه sent Amir Muawiya's brother Yazid bin Abu Sufyan رضي الله عنه to Syria with an army, he gave Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه a division and put him in charge of supplying aid to him. In the Syrian expedition, his performance was extremely marvelous and a good indication of his abilities and he impressed all by his acts of valor. Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه made him the permanent administrator of Jordan. When Sahabas like Abu Obeida and Yazid bin Abu Sufyan died of the plague of Amwas, Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه appointed him the ruler of Damascus, the jurisdiction of his brother. Jordan and other districts were included under his government. When Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه went to Bait al-Maqdis (Jerusalem), Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه accorded a reception for him and accompanied him. Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه objected to Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه saying, "You have adopted the royal way of living and I have heard, you have assigned door keepers." Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه said, "The Syrian borders always remain in danger of incursion by the Roman soldiers and attack. Their spies keep roaming throughout Syria. I think the external pomp and grandeur is necessary to keep the Roman emperor and the Christians in awe and the door keepers keep the Roman spies at bay."

Satisfied with this answer Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه no longer questioned him. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه sought his permission for launching a naval attack on Constantinople and the capture of the islands in the Mediterranean Sea. But Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه did not allow him to do so. When Uthman bin Affan رضي الله عنه became caliph after Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه, he made Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه the governor of Syria and all the adjoining areas. He permitted him to prepare a navy and extended his powers. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه captured Syria and considerably strengthened the Islamic rule there, kept the Roman emperor in terror and awe of him and did not give the Christians a chance to attack the Islamic territories. What transpired between him and Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه after the martyrdom of Uthman bin Affan رضي الله عنه has been discussed in Volume 1 of this book, there was a truce between Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه

رضي الله عنه and Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه. Till the month of Rabia al-Awwal 41 Hijra, the entire Islamic world took ba'it (Arabic for the swearing of allegiance) at the hands of Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه and Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه accepted him as the caliph. Up to that time, Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه had been the governor of Syria for twenty years. After becoming caliph and emperor of the whole Islamic world, he remained alive for twenty years more. The total period of his rule was forty years. In the first half of the forty years, he was a ruler of a province or Governor and in the second half, he ruled as caliph or emperor. I have recorded in detail his conditions, circumstances and important events in the first volume. From this point, we have to consider him as Caliph for the events in the second half of his rule and hence he has been named caliph in the following text.

## **Virtues and Habits**

Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه has narrated 163 Ahadith (Traditions which afterwards were in turn narrated by Sahabas like Ibn Abbas, Ibn Umar, Ibn Zubair, Abu Darda رضي الله عنهم and Tabeyeens (those who saw the companions of the Prophet but not the Prophet himself) like Ibn ul-Musayyib and Humaid bin Abdur Rahman رحمهما الله. Many traditions are popular about his greatness. Tirmidhi, under the caption 'Traditions of Hasan' has written that the Prophet ﷺ said "O Allāh! Make Muawiya (رضي الله عنه) the guide and the guided." It is recorded in *Musnad* Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal that the Prophet ﷺ said, "O Allāh! Teach Muawiya (رضي الله عنه) calculation and save him from punishment." Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه himself says, "I hoped to be caliph the moment when the Prophet ﷺ told me that when you become a king, treat people with kindness." Amir Muawiya's رضي الله عنه patience and common sense was proverbial. Once after performing Hajj during his caliphate he came to Madinah and stayed there for a few days. One day when Abdullah bin Mohammad bin Aqil bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه was sitting with Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه, Abu Qatada Ansari رضي الله عنه also arrived. Seeing him Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه said, "All came to meet me except Ansari." Abu Qatada رضي الله عنه said, "We have no means of communications and so we could not come." Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه said, "What about your camels?" He said, "All our



camels have got tired by following you and your father." Then he began to say, "I have heard the Prophet ﷺ say that a time would come when people would prefer the undeserving to the deserving." Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه said, "Then, has the Prophet ﷺ said something about how to act in such a situation?" Abu Qatada رضي الله عنه said, "The Prophet ﷺ has said about such a situation that the people should be patient." Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه said, "Then have patience."

A young man from the Quraish went to Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه and started abusing him. Hearing his unbecoming language Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه said, "O my nephew! Desist from this misbehavior because a king's anger is like a child's but his accountability is like a tiger's." Shābi has said, that there are four wise men among the Arab: Amir Muawiya Amr bin Al-Aas, Mughira bin Shoba and Zeyad رضي الله عنهم. Muawiya for his patience and common sense, Amr bin Al-Aas for the capacity to solve knotty problems if suddenly encountered, Mughira for maintaining his cool and Zeyad in all small and big matters.

Similarly there are also four Qadis (Judges) Umar bin Khattab, Ali bin Abi Talib, Ibn Masood and Zaid bin Thabit رضي الله عنهم.

Jabir رضي الله عنه says, "I have seen none greater than Umar رضي الله عنه as a scholar of the Qur'ân and Fiqah, than Talha bin Obaidullah رضي الله عنه as a giver without being asked, than Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه as a man of patience and commonsense, than Amr bin Al-Aas رضي الله عنه as a sincere friend. One day Aqil bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه went to Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه. Seeing him Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه out of good humor, said, "Here is Aqil. His uncle was Abu Lahab". Aqil quickly retorted, "Here is Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه his father's sister was Hammalat al-Hatab. (This is in reference to the chapter Masad, the Palm Fiber, of Quran where Allah is promising punishment to Abu Lahab and Hammalat al-Hatab, his wife who brings the fuel for the fire).

When someone asked Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنه about Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه he said, "His patience was a antidote to anger and his generosity kept the people tongue tied." He knew how to join hearts and that strengthened his rule. One day Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه himself said, "The success I had against Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه was due to four factors:



1. I used to guard my secrets while Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه, disclosed every thing to the people.
2. My army was obedient while Ali's army was disobedient.
3. I did not take part in the Jamal war (The war between Ali رضي الله عنه and Aaisha رضي الله عنها)
4. I was popular with the Quraish while its people were displeased with Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه.

### **Important events during Amir Muawiya's Caliphate**

When Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه sat on the throne Caliphate there were found three kinds of people in respect of faith and action in the Islamic world. The first sect was of the partisans of Ali. They thought that Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه deserved the Caliphate and after him, his progeny was entitled to the Caliphate. This sect was found in Iraq and Iran even more. It was also found Egypt. But it dwindled after the renunciation of the throne by Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه and his reconciliation with Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه. The second sect was of the partisans of Muawiya or partisans of Banu Umayyah. It included the whole of Syria and some Arabian tribes like Banu Kalb.

Due to the assassination of Uthman bin Affan رضي الله عنه, these people believed that Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه and Banu Umayyah were entitled to the Caliphate and were ready to extend all help to them. The third sect was called Khwarij. They considered the first two sects to have gone astray and into unbelief and thus they used all their powers against them. The hypocrites and conspirators who were unanimously the enemies of Islam remained mingled with this people. The majority of these Khwarij were in Iraq mostly in Basra and Kufa. Besides these three sects, there was one more sect, which remained aloof from all these controversies and wanted to live a life of withdrawal. This group consisted mostly of the great Sahabas. These people were mostly found in Madinah Munawwara and Makkah Mukarama and lived in the rural areas of the Hijaz or the pastures of camels. After becoming caliph, Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه first had to face the Khwarij. When the truce was signed in the last ten days of Rabia al-Awwal 41 Hegira and people in general took the oath at the

hands of Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه. Farwa bin Naufil Ashjai, a Khwarij along with 500 other Khwarij readied themselves to oppose him, left Kufa and camped at a place named Nakhlia.

Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه instead of taking strong measures against them acted with commonsense. He assembled the Kufis and exhorted them. He said, "These are your own kith and kin. You yourselves should make them understand and acquaint them with the horrible consequences of opposition or fighting." The people of the Ashja tribe were so impressed that they went and brought Farwa bin Naufil Ashja as a captive. The Khwarij made Abdullah bin Abil Hausa their leader and they did not show any inclination towards reconciliation. At last, the Kufis fought with them and Abdullah was killed. After that, their number was reduced to only 150. Then they chose Abu Hausa Asadi as their leader. They were also appealed to for reconciliation, but they preferred to die fighting and paid no heed to death. Finally, Abu Hausa and his associates were killed while fighting and some of them fled to different towns of Iraq and Iran. That was the first confrontation that Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه had in Kufa after becoming caliph. Also, he became aware of different groups of Khwarij, which were present in the towns all over Iraq.

### Appointment of Officials

Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه had already given the governorship of Egypt to Amr bin Al-Aas رضي الله عنه. Now on becoming the caliph of the whole Islamic world he appointed Sayeed bin Al-Aas and Marwan bin Hakam رضي الله عنهما governors of Makkah and Madinah respectively. Sayeed and Marwan رضي الله عنهما both were his relatives. He deputed them in Makkah and Madinah so that in these key cities of the Islamic world, no opposition group might rise up and to eliminate the possibility of any conspiracy. He did not go for Hajj every year he would appoint one of them as the Amir of Hajj. He was also very alive to the possibility that either of them could take advantage of the centrality and importance of Makkah and Madinah to gain power and influence. Because of this, he used to interchange their posts every year. After taking the ba'it for his Caliphate in Kufa, Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه made Mughira bin Shoba رضي الله عنه the governor of Kufa and

instructed him to crush the sedition of the Khwarij at any cost. He sent a letter to the governors of the remaining provinces and territories to take ba'it from the people on his behalf and consider themselves assigned on his behalf. In Persia Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه had deputed Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan رضي الله عنه who was considered to be from amongst partisans of Ali. Zeyad was known for his intelligence all over Arabia and had been ruling over Persia very successfully. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه thought that if Zeyad betrayed him and made anyone from the progeny of Ali رضي الله عنه the caliph and took ba'it at his hand and rebelled against him (Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه), then it would pose a major problem. Therefore, he gave the priority to a plan to bring him under his control.

### **Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan رضي الله عنه**

Zeyad's mother Sumayya was the slave of Harith bin Kilab Thagafi. People had doubts about who his real father was. In fact, Abu Sufyan married Sumayya before embracing Islam and Zeyad was born of them. Zeyad resembled Abu Sufyan but the members of Abu Sufyan's family and Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه did not accept Zeyad as Abu Sufyan's son. When Zeyad heard that Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه was recognized as the caliph, he hesitated in taking ba'it, (the oath of allegiance) and accepting Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه as the caliph. At that time, Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه thought it wise to give a letter of protection to Zeyad's friend Mughira bin Shoba and send him to Zeyad and include him in his family and lineage by accepting him as Abu Sufyan's son. Mughira took the letter to Zeyad in Persia attested all the accounts of the treasury and brought him to Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه received him warmly and accepted him as his brother. His name was officially written in all papers as ibn Abi Sufyan. Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه was sure that Zeyad was Abi Sufyan's son because Abi Sufyan once in his presence at a meeting with Umar bin al-Khattab رضي الله عنه had admitted him as his son and so Umar رضي الله عنه made Zeyad the governor of Persia. Now Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه gave him greater honor, promoted him and made him the governor of Basra and instructed him to set and keep the people of Basra on the right path. Having arrived in Basra, Zeyad

assembled the inhabitants of Basra in the Central Mosque and made a grand and impressive speech. The people then had grown very undisciplined. Theft, robbery and sedition were rampant everywhere. Immediately after his arrival in Basra Zeyad instituted martial law and ordered that whosoever went out of his house or was seen in the field at night would be killed without any trial. That order was strictly complied with and in a few days the people of Basra became humble.

Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه after making Zeyad and Mughira governors of Basra and Kufa respectively was relieved of pressure from the Iraqi and Persian fronts because all the provinces of Iran were under Kufa and Basra.

Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه extended Zeyad's jurisdiction up to Persia, Jazirah, the northern section of land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and Sajistan. By including all these places in the jurisdiction of the governor of Basra, he had put an end to all possible sedition in the eastern territories. The Khawarij used to raise their heads off and on in rebellion in Iraq and Persia but Zeyad and Mughira together stamped them out very boldly and efficiently and did not allow any critical situation to be created, which might add to Amir Muawiya's رضى الله عنه troubles. Zeyad used not only strong measures in his jurisdiction but also behaved mildly and made allowances as the situation demanded. Once it was reported that Abul Khair, who was a brave and intelligent man, turned friendly to the Khawarij, Zeyad at once called for him and sent him back by making him an official of Jundi Saboor and thus he averted any future danger very wisely.

The governor of Egypt Amr bin Al-Aas رضى الله عنه died in 43 Hegira. Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه appointed his son Abdullah bin Amr its governor in his place. That same year when the Khawarij in Kufa saw that Mughira did not behave harshly like Zeyad and sometimes overlooked the people's weak points, hatched a conspiracy for rebellion. Had Zeyad been in place of Mughira, the Khawarij would not have dared such a bold step. Zeyad knew the Khawarij very well and the inhabitants of Basra were humbled as mentioned earlier. Under the command of Masturad bin Alqama more than three hundred Khawarij left Kufa on 1 Shawwal 43 A.H., which corresponded to Eid al-Fitr (the celebration after the month of fasting and one of the two official

Muslim holidays). Mughira sent an army of three thousand soldiers after them. In ensuing battle, the three hundred Khawarij defeated the three thousand soldiers from Kufa.

More men were sent and they also met the same fate. At last, under the command of Ma'qil bin Qais a large army set out. As a consequence, Ma'qil bin Qais and Masturad bin Alqama were killed while facing each other and all the Khawarij except five were exterminated, the impact of this event was so great that Mughira bin Shoba paid more attention and was more cautious about the threat of the Khawarij.

The northern borders of Syria always faced danger from the Roman Empire. There was also the danger of a naval attack on the Syrian coast. Egypt and North Africa were also under constant attack by the Romans. Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه, after settling the eastern problems, spent all his energy and resources confronting the danger from the Romans. He prepared a naval force and enhanced the salaries of the sailors to attract others to join. He had two thousand war boats prepared, made Junada bin Umayya the Admiral. He made the army more powerful, arranged separately the defensive and offensive armies besides enhancing the supply links. He divided the army into two parts. The first was called Shitiwi, meaning winter forces and the second was Saifia, meaning summer forces. In both seasons the army kept a strict vigil on the borders by eliminating and suppressing the Roman forces. The naval forces made the Island of Cyprus its headquarters, they dispossessed the Roman forces from the Mediterranean Sea and made the Egyptian and Syrian coasts safe from enemy naval invasion. The adjoining provinces of Sajistan like Rehaj were conquered. In the same year, the Islamic army made advances towards Barqah, (historic region of North Africa and Sudan) and thus the area of Islamic rule was considerably extended.

### **Invasion of Constantinople**

In 48 A.H. after taking stock of the Roman emperor's power, Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه thought it necessary to launch a naval attack on the Roman capital of Constantinople and put an end to the air of invulnerability they enjoyed and shatter the future ambitions of the

Christians in such a way that they would not dare to even look towards the Islamic borders. He made up his mind to invade Constantinople and made a declaration in Makkah and Madinah that the Muslims were going to attack Constantinople. Since the Companions knew the Prophet's tradition, "The first army that attacks the city of the Roman emperor, would be forgiven," the illustrious Sahabas like Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه, Abdullah bin Zubair, Abdullah bin Abbas, Husain bin Ali, and Abu Ayyub Ansari رضي الله عنه, gladly participated in the hope of getting redemption. A large army was prepared and he sent it to Constantinople under the command of Sufyan bin Auf and a part of the army was commanded by his son Yazid who was an officer of the summer forces, this army proceeded by sea. Another part moved towards Constantinople by the land route. The Muslims laid siege to the city, because the ramparts and the location of the city were extremely strong, the siege and the attacks were unsuccessful. A few great and lion-hearted men from the Muslim side were martyred.

Abu Ayyub Ansari رضي الله عنه died during the siege and was buried under the city's ramparts. Due to severe cold and natural impediments, the Muslims returned without conquering Constantinople. Although the invasion was a failure and the city could not be brought under the control of the Muslims, the consequences of the invasion achieved an important objective. The Roman emperor and his army considered themselves as lucky to avoid conquest and they did not want to provoke another attack and put themselves in future danger so the Romans ceased to attack the Islamic borders and all the provinces under dispute between the Muslims and the Christian finally came under the control of the Muslims.

In 50 A.H., Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه made Oqba bin Nafi the commander in chief of Egypt, Barqah and Sudan, and afterwards sent ten thousand more soldiers, he instructed his commander to advance westward and capture all of North African. The Berbers used to obey the Muslims whenever the Islamic army arrived there but as soon as they found the Muslims relaxed and engaged somewhere else, they rebelled and asserted their independence. Oqba bin Nafi passed through Egypt and Barqah and invaded Tunis and Tripoli and after capturing all these provinces, advanced towards Tlemcen, in the

northwestern part of modern day Algeria near Morocco. In the same year the administrator of Makran, (the coastal area of modern day Pakistan and Iran) and Baluchistan, (western most province of modern day Pakistan), Abdullah bin Sawar, attacked Sindh, (province of southeastern Pakistan), in order to discipline the Sindhis. The Sindhis, who were fully prepared, faced him firmly. Abdullah bin Sawar was martyred in the battle. Mahlab bin Abi Safra was determined to be victorious and captured a large part of Sindh.

### **Yazid the Heir Apparent**

During the same year, 50 A.H., Mughira left Kufa and came to Damascus and told Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه, that he had seen the events of Uthman bin Affan's رضي الله عنه martyrdom in Madinah and all those scenes of the subsequent horrors were passing before his eyes, the malicious kinds of upheaval and disturbances that it created were for the sake of gaining the Caliphate. "So I think is proper that you should nominate your son, Yazid to be Caliph after you and in it lies the security and welfare of the Muslims". Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه had never planned to make his son the caliph. Mughira's words turned his attention to it and gave him this idea. He said to Mughira, "Is it possible that people would take ba'it for the Caliphate of my son?" Mughira said, "This is quite possible. I shall persuade the people of Kufa. Zayed bin Sufyan will force the people of Basra and in Makkah and Madinah Marwan bin Hakam and Sayeed bin Aas will make the people do so and as for Syria, there is no possibility of any opposition." Hearing this Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه sent Mughira to Kufa to execute the plan. This same incident has been found recorded elsewhere as follows: "Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه wrote to Mughira bin Shoba, the governor of Kufa, "that you should be yourself deposed immediately after reading this letter." However, when that letter was received by Mughira, he delayed its execution. When he reached Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه, he enquired about the cause of delay in execution of his orders. Mughira said, "I was engaged in getting ready for a plan." Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه said, "What was that plan?" Mughira said, "I was taking ba'it from the people for the future Caliphate of your son. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه was pleased to hear that and sent him back to Kufa. When Mughira arrived in Kufa, the Kufis asked him

about the affair, he said, "I have thrown him in such a mire that he won't come out of it until doomsday." It is clearly known that it was Mughira bin Shoba who was instrumental in persuading Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه for the idea of making his son the future Caliph, which led to it becoming the convention of the reign of succession among the Muslims, that the son succeeded his father or king and the practice of selection by consultation was done away with. Yazid was Amir Muawiya's son and it was only natural for a father to love his son and try to enhance his prestige and make him king. Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه may to some extent be taken as helpless or weak but no excuse can be offered on behalf of Mughira bin Shoba.

Mughira arrived in Kufa, called all the noblemen and those who were influential among the Arabs to him and tried to convince them to accept Yazid as the heir apparent. The influential people of Kufa showed willingness and agreed with the intention of saving the Muslims from all kinds of riots and disturbances and that the Amir ul-Muminin should nominate his son to be Caliph after him. Mughira then sent a delegation of illustrious Kufis along with his son to Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه. It called on him and expressed its willingness that ba'it for Yazid's caliphate should be taken. The arrival of that delegation strengthened the intention and wish of Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه, which Mughira had already created in his mind. He saw the delegation off with great honor and said to them, "When the time comes ba'it from you will be taken." Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه was a very far-sighted and scrupulous man. He wanted to know whether the majority of the Islamic world agreed to his view or not. He then wrote to Marwan bin Hakam, the governor of Madinah, and Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan, the governor of Basra: "I have grown old. I do not want any riots or disturbances to break out among the Muslims for the sake of taking the caliphate. I want that in my lifetime I should nominate someone to be caliph after me. Among the elders, I do not see anybody who would be suitable and among the young, I suppose my son, Yazid, seems to be the best. You should consult people and make consultation about it cautiously and influence them to take ba'it for Yazid's caliphate in the future. When the letter was received by Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan the governor of Basra, he showed it to a man of rank named Obaid bin Kâb Numairi and told him, "In my opinion



Amir ul- Muminin has taken a hasty step in this affair. He has not thought over it deeply because Yazid is a youth who leads a life of entertainment. People know very well that he is fond of touring and hunting and so they would certainly cause hesitation in taking ba'it. Obadiah bin Kāb said to him, "You need not express your disagreement to the Amir ul- Muminin's view. Simply send me to Damascus and I shall see Yazid and make him see reason and that he should reform himself so that there will not be any hitch in the way of taking ba'it for him. I am sure he will accept this advice. When his conditions undergo a pleasant change, the people will also not hesitate in taking ba'it, and the Amir ul-Muminin's wish will be fulfilled."

Zeyad appreciated the idea and immediately sent Obaid to Damascus. Obaid made Yazid understand all the subtleties of the matter and Yazid respected this advice, he reformed himself remarkably and silenced the people on this point.

When the letter reached Marwan in Madinah, he assembled the noblemen there and read to them this much, "the Amir ul-Muminin has the intention of saving the Muslims from all possible riots and disturbances by nominating someone to be caliph after him." All appreciated the idea and expressed their willingness to support it. A few days after Marwan again assembled the people and read to them, "Another letter from Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه has come from Damascus. He has written that in view of the betterment of Muslims he has nominated Yazid as the heir apparent." At this time Abdur Rahman bin Abi Bakr, Abdullah bin Umar, Abdullah bin Zubair and Husain bin Ali رضى الله عنهم expressed great resentment. They said, "This selection has been made not for the welfare of the Muslims but for their annihilation because by this way the Islamic Caliphate will resemble the Roman and Persian empires in which the son succeeds his father to the throne this selection is against the spirit of Islam."

As a parenthesis, here attention should be drawn to the fact when Marwan bin Hakam proclaimed in Madinah Amir Muawiya's intention, Imam Hasan رضى الله عنه had died a few months before. The people generally knew that at the time of reconciliation with Imam Hasan رضى الله عنه, Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه in accordance with efforts made by Abdullah bin Amir, was ready to have the declaration that

Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه should be made Caliph after him included into the treaty of compromise although Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه did not have it mentioned in the treaty of peace. The people thought that although the future Caliphate of Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه did not find mention in the treaty, the Islamic world would agree to his Caliphate. When Marwan bin Hakam first read Amir Muawiya's letter in Madinah, most of the people felt that it was due to Imam Hasan's death that Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه had the idea in his heart to nominate some one, since Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه had died and he was considered to be the next logical choice, another nominee should be chosen as the future caliph. Their thinking was based on Amir Muawiya's nobility and love of justice, this created a ray of hope in the hearts of those who considered themselves to be worthy of the caliphate. When Marwan made the second proclamation about Yazid, the concept created by his first proclamation, suddenly dissipated and immediately various kinds of doubts were being expressed. Some people went to the extent of speculating that it was Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه who had Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه poisoned. Before the proclamation of Yazid's nomination, no one harbored any thought connecting Imam Hasan's death to Amir Muawiya's رضي الله عنه efforts or intention.

Here it is pertinent to draw the attention of the respected readers that Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه was absolutely impeccable concerning any involvement in the poisoning of Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه and that it was Mughira bin Shoba who after Imam Hasan's death drew Amir Muawiya's رضي الله عنه attention to Yazid's nomination. He himself had never thought about it.

Just as Mughira bin Shoba was instrumental in getting Yazid nominated as the future Caliph, he also did his best to supervise this endeavor to that end. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه was silent to the resentment expressed by the people of Madinah and the Hijaz which he came to know through Marwan's letter and thought how to persuade the people of Madinah to his point of view. At that time, he received the news that Mughira bin Shoba رضي الله عنه died in Kufa. That was in 51 A.H. Hearing this news he handed over the government of Kufa to Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan and Zeyad came to be known as the governor of Iraqain (the two Iraqs).

## **Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan in Kufa**

In handing over to Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan the governorship of Basra and Kufa the practical benefit was that he could persuade all the people of Iraq to take ba'it for Yazid's caliphate and nobody else could have performed this task so well. Besides, Mughira was somewhat soft hearted and forgiving. However, Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan was more familiar with the nature of Iraqis. He knew that if they were not dealt with sternly, they could not be expected to be on the right path. That was why the tenure of his rule was highly successful and he was the first person who was made the governor of Kufa and Basra both and later on the whole of Iran and Khorasan up to Turkistan was handed over to him. Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan made Samura bin Jundub his deputy in Basra and he himself, along with two thousand people, set out for Kufa. When he started giving the Khutba (the Friday sermon) in the Central Mosque in Kufa, the Kufis who were accustomed to humiliate their officers and disobey the government officials, started mocking him, they began to shower pebbles over him. He stopped the Khutba and ordered his men to surround the mosque and not to let anyone out of it. Then he sat in the chair at the door of the mosque and by calling four persons at a time, began to ask whether they had thrown the pebbles. Thirty people were found to have done so. He let off the others and had the hands of the thirty guilty ones cut off. Similar punishments were awarded to the other Kufis for their faults. Consequently, in a matter of days they were humbled. Zeyad began to live in Kufa and Basra alternatively for six months each.

Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه issued a declaration to all his officials to the effect that they should narrate Yazid's good traits and send delegations of the influential people of their respective territories to him (Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه) in order that he might also talk to the people regarding Yazid's ba'it. Afterwards, delegations from all the territories arrived in Damascus. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه talked to them separately and then arranged a meeting and asked them to attend it. He then stood up and read a Khutba in which after praising Allah and the Prophet ﷺ, dwelt at length on the virtues of Islam, rights and duties of caliphs, obedience to the rulers and duties of the masses.

He then talked about Yazid's manliness, generosity, wisdom, thinking power and his ability for administration. At the end, he expressed his wish that they should take ba'it for Yazid's caliphate. Among the delegates from Madinah was Mohammad bin Amr bin Hazam, he stood up and said, "Amir ul- Muminin ! You are going to make Yazid Caliph but kindly think over it a little that you will have to answer to Allāh on the Day of Judgement for this act of yours." Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه said, "I am thankful to you that you wished me well according to your view. But the fact is that there in none but young boys at this hour and my son among them deserves it most." Then Dhahak bin Qais stood up and in an eloquent speech, he strongly supported Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه. Then a few more persons stood up and all of them supported him. Ahnaf bin Qais from Egypt was also there. When the series of speeches came to an end, Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه turned to Ahnaf bin Qais and asked why he was silent. He said, "If I tell a lie, I fear Allāh; if I speak the truth, I fear you. Why do you consult us on this issue? You know Yazid better than us and at your insistence, we are ready to take ba'it." Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه took those words to be a sign from God and he pleased Ahnaf afterwards by rewarding him greatly. Thus enriched with good rewards the foreign delegates returned highly pleased. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه was very much perturbed about the people of Hijaz, Makkah and Madinah because it was there that the people might oppose him boldly. At the end of 51 A.H., he thought of going for the Hajj, thinking that he might be able to convert the people of Hijaz to his own opinion. Consequently, he first went to Madinah. Hearing of his arrival Abdullah bin Zubair, Abdullah bin Umar, Abdullah bin Abbas and Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنهم went to Makkah. Having reached Madinah, Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه amply rewarded the people and won them over his to side and instructed Marwan bin Hakam to enhance their daily allowances, give them loans from the state treasury and not insist on its collection in order to avoid opposition and in this way oblige them. Then he proceeded to Makkah. Reaching there, he called the four persons mentioned who objected to him and talked about Yazid's ba'it. Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه said, "I can admit this much that I will accept as Caliph the man on whom there is a popular consensus. Even if a slave is made caliph I shall obey him

and not part with the Jamat." Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه said, "I put before you a few points. You are at liberty to choose whichever suits you (1) You must act upon the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ and leave the issue of Caliphate without nominating anyone on the Muslims so that they might elect the caliph whom they want. If you do not like it, then you act upon the *Sunnah* of Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه and depute to your post a man who comes neither from your tribe nor your family and if this is also not to your liking, then emulate Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه by nominating six persons who are neither of your family or tribe nor your own son. Those six persons should be at liberty to choose anyone as caliph from among themselves. There is no fourth alternative except these three to which we may agree." Others also seconded Abdullah. After Hajj Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه took *bay'ah* for the caliphate of Yazid from all the people of Makkah except the four persons mentioned above. He gave money to the general people. There is no doubt that Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه in order to convert the people to his opinion, used his wealth and it is just possible that he might have had the conviction that Yazid's nomination was really beneficial to the world of Islam and its harmful aspect might have been hidden from him. When he returned to Damascus after Hajj, he heard of the demise of Abu Musa Ashari رضي الله عنه in Kufa. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه had already made Zeyad the ruler of Basra and Kufa and moreover the area up to Sajistan was under him. Now he thought it proper to put under Zeyad's control all the eastern countries up to Sindh, Kabul, Balkh, Khorasan and Turkistan. Zeyad's stature became so high that he began to appoint the governors of Persia and Khorasan according to his own choice and depose who ever he wanted. Zeyad managed and administrated these eastern countries very efficiently and did not give any chance to the Khwarij to rebel. Zeyad was a great asset and help to Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه and he was fortunate to have had such an able and qualified person at his disposal. If Zeyad had not been able to maintain peace in the eastern territories, uprisings of the Khwarij and mischief of the Munafiqin, (hypocrites) would not have given him enough time to make the many arrangements for Yazid's *bay'ah*. Besides, the impact of disturbances in the eastern territories would also have had a bad affect on the western territories and would not have given him any

peace and security to accomplish his other projects.

Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه had made Maslama bin Mukhallad governor of Egypt and Africa after Abdullah bin Amr. Oqba bin Nafe Fihri who was advancing towards the west, Tripoli, Tlemcen and Morocco and whom Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه himself had deputed on that expedition was now brought under the command of the Egyptian governor Maslama bin Mukhallad. Makkah and Madinah were under the governorship of Sayeed bin Aas and Marwan bin Hakam. Syria and Palestine were under the direct administration of Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه. Oqba bin Nafe Fihri in view of the requirements of North Africa, laid the foundation of the city of Qairwan by cutting down the forest. The cantonment for Africa at Qairwan was as indispensable to North Africa as Basra and Kufa was to Iraq.

As soon as the population of Qairwan reached its peak in 55 A.H., Maslama bin Mukhallad deposed Oqba bin Nafe and appointed his slave Abul Muhajir the commander-in-chief. Oqba bin Nafe then was reassigned to Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه in Damascus. When the great advisers like Marwan, Sayeed, and Oqba and the valiant chiefs from the Arabs were assembled in Damascus and while Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan kept the flag of victory flying over the Islamic cities, the *bay'ah* for Yazid was taken by the whole Islamic world in 56 A.H. Only four persons, Abdullah bin Zubair, Abdullah bin Umar, Abdullah bin Abbas and Husain bin Ali رضى الله عنهم did not take the *ba'it*. Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه left them on their own and did not think it proper to force them.

### **The death of Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan**

In 53 A. H., Zeyad bin Abu Sufyan died of plague. His death dealt a hard blow to Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه. Zeyad had requested to be made the governor of the Hijaz and the rest of the Arabs besides Iraq and Persia. Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه granted his request. However, the inhabitants of the Hijaz were extremely terrified when they heard this and they went to Abdullah bin Umar to seek a way to be safe from Zeyad's rule. They made a Du'a (prayer or supplication to Allah) by turning their faces to Ka'bah and all

together, they said Amén. That prayer resulted in the appearance of a pimple on Zeyad's finger ultimately leading to his death. He died in Kufa during the sacred month of Ramadan. Zeyad had given the governorship of Kufa to Khalid bin Usaid on his own accord. When he died, his son Obaidullah was 25 years old. Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه asked him about the governorships that his father had given to the people. Abdullah replied that Samura bin Jundub was made the governor of Basra and Khalid bin Usaid was appointed governor of Kufa. Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه asked him "What governorship did you get?" Obaidullah said, "I have not been given the governorship of any territory." Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه said, "Since your father did not give you the governorship of any territory, I shall also not make you the governor of any territory either." Obaidullah said, "What greater humiliation is there for me than that neither my father appointed me governor nor you, my uncle would do so." Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه pondered over it for some time and then he appointed him supreme officer of Basra, Khorasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkamanistan, and northern Afghanistan) and Persia. Sayeed bin Uthman bin Affan رضى الله عنه had taken *bay'ah*, (oath of allegiance) for Yazid. When he came to know that Abdullah bin Zubair, Abdullah bin Abbas, and Husain bin Ali رضى الله عنهم did not take the *bay'ah*, he said, "My father was not inferior to the fathers of these people. I have unjustly taken *ba'it* for Yazid." Then he went to Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه and said to him, "My father had not done any wrong to you. Tell me what is your obligation on me?" Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه then took away the province of Khorasan from Obaidullah bin Zeyad and gave it to Sayeed bin Uthman. He then made Muhallab bin Abu Sufra Sayeed's helper and commander-in-chief. He sent Marwan and Sayeed to Madinah and Makkah to govern.

No sooner had Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan died than the Khawarij raised their heads and Obaidullah bin Zeyad, immediately after taking over the reins of Basra, had to face them. The groups of Khawarij started launching attacks incessantly and up to the time of Amir Muawiya's death, Obaidullah bin Zeyad remained engaged in disciplining and humbling them.

### **The death of Aisha رضي الله عنها**

After the death in 58 A. H., Ummul-Muminin Aisha رضي الله عنها was buried in Jannat al-Baqi. She used to oppose Marwan because his deeds were not good.

In 59 A. H. Abu Huraira رضي الله عنه died. He often made the Du'a, "O Allāh! I seek your protection against the rule of young boys." His prayer was accepted and he died before 60 A. H.

### **The death of Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه**

Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه fell ill in the beginning of Rajab 60 A. H. During that illness when he was sure that his time had come, he called for Yazid. Yazid at that time was on a hunting trip or expedition outside of Damascus. At once, a messenger was sent to bring him. When Yazid came, he addressed him thus:

"O my son! Listen to my words attentively and answer my questions. Now the Decree of Allāh, the time of my death, has come. Tell me, how do you want to treat the Muslims?"

Yazid said, "I shall follow the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ."

Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه said, "You should also follow the *Sunnah* of Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه who fought with the apostates and died such a death that people were pleased with him."

Yazid said, "No, I shall follow the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ."

Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه said again, "O my son! Follow the conduct of Umar bin al-Khattab رضي الله عنه he populated cities, improved the capability of the army and distributed the spoils of war among the soldiers."

Yazid said, "No, following the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ is enough."

Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه said, "O my son! Follow the way of Uthman



bin Affan رضى الله عنه he did good to the people during his life time and was generous."

Yazid said, "No, the Book of Allāh and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ are enough for me."

When Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه heard him, he said, "O my son! Your talk has convinced me that you will not follow my advice. You will go against my will. O Yazid, don't be proud that I have made you my heir-apparent and the people have taken the oath of allegiance for your succession. You have no danger from Abdullah bin Umar رضى الله عنه because he is weary of this world. The Iraqis will certainly put Husain bin Ali رضى الله عنه against you. If you gain victory over him, don't slay him and give due regard for kinship. Abdullah bin Zubair رضى الله عنه is a deceitful person. If you get the better of him, slay him. Always accommodate the inhabitants of Makkah and Madinah. If the Iraqis want a change in their functionaries, keep changing them for their pleasure. Regard the Syrians as your helpers and rely on their friendship."

Yazid then left and rejoined the hunt party. Amir Muawiya's condition started deteriorating day after day until he breathed his last on Thursday, 22 Rajab 60 A. H. He was 70 years old at the time of his death.

He had in his possession some hair and a nail of the Prophet ﷺ. At his death, he left in his will that these should be put into his mouth and on his eyes. Dhahak bin Qais led the funeral prayer. He was buried in between Bab Jabia (Jabia gate) and Bab Sagheer (Sagheer gate) in Damascus.

### **A Glance at Amir Muawiya's رضى الله عنه Caliphate**

The 20-year-long reign of Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه must be called successful because during that period none of the claimants to the caliphate or his rivals dared to rebel against him. During his reign, the Islamic territory expanded in all the four directions. No Islamic territory or province remained apart from his government. No rebellion of any consequence broke out. No robberies and disorder, which were found in Iraq and Iran during Ali's time, existed any

more. The Muslims began fighting naval battles and even the Romans and the Christians acknowledged their superiority as a naval power. During his age, Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan and certain other governors justified the continued subjection of the Iraqis and Iranians to coercion and violence. If the Iraqis and Iranians were not dealt with harshly, it would have been considered an injustice and taken as negligence of the part of Amir Muawiya. It was he who first appointed postmen and established a system and organization and called it the postal department. He was the first who invented the system of putting a seal on orders and keeping a copy of every order preserved in the caliph's office. His seal contained the inscription "تُكَلَّ عَمَلُ نَوَابٍ", for every deed there is a reward. Until his time, the cover on the Ka'bah was put on top of the old covers. He had all the old covers removed and gave instructions that whenever a new cover was put on, the old cover should be removed. He was the first in Islam to introduce the system of keeping watchmen and door keepers. He was also the first to establish the registry department. He was the first to have ships built and prepare a naval force.

Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه, no doubt, wanted to establish his rule and for his clan and family to have superiority in power over Banu Hashim. However, in fulfilling his wish, he did not want to give a chance to any of the enemies of Banu Umayyah and Banu Hashim or the enemies of Muawiya and Ali to perpetrate a reign of terror or to harm the Islamic government. That is why once when Ali and Muawiya رضي الله عنهما were in opposition, a huge Christian army was planning to attack on the eastern provinces of Iran, which was under Ali's rule and they wanted to take advantage of the disunity among the Muslims. Ali رضي الله عنه was incapable of defending these places, which were targeted to come under attack by the Christians and if the Christians attacked, a large of part of the Islamic territory would have been lost. The Christians were aware of the difficulties Ali رضي الله عنه was facing and therefore felt there would be no threat from Amir Muawiya's side as they had been following the mutual opposition between Muawiya and Ali and their use of force against each other. They expected that Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه would like them to attack Ali رضي الله عنه. However, as soon as Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه heard that news, he, contrary to the expectations of the Christian emperor, wrote

to the emperor, "You should not be deceived by our infighting. If you turn towards Ali رضي الله عنه the first chief who advances to punish you under Ali's flag, will be Muawiyah." The impact of that letter was far more than an army and the Christians gave up the idea.

The nature of the difference or opposition that existed between Ali رضي الله عنه and Amir Muawiyah رضي الله عنه was not as is conceived by the Muslims of today, which is due to their ignorance and lack of understanding of the facts. In order to arrive at a correct judgment, we must not forget the fact that Ali's brother Aqil bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه was Amir Muawiyah's friend and Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan, ther brother of Amir Muawiyah was appointed governor of Iran by Ali رضي الله عنه. Ali رضي الله عنه fully trusted Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan. Aqil bin Abi Talib used to admonish Amir Muawiyah رضي الله عنه in the open court and yet the latter always indulged him.

### Answer to a doubt

Before closing the chapter on the caliphate of Amir Muawiyah رضي الله عنه it is necessary to clear up a common doubt.

Ali رضي الله عنه was trained and tutored by the Prophet ﷺ and was included in his family and kept constant company with him. He was also his (ﷺ) cousin and son-in-law. Amir Muawiyah رضي الله عنه was the Prophet's scribe of the Revelations, his friend, his brother-in-law by virtue of being Umm Habiba's brother, and his Companion. Why did Ali رضي الله عنه and Amir Muawiyah رضي الله عنه oppose and fight each other? Again, why did a sizable number of illustrious Sahabah like 'Amr bin Al-A'as, Talha, Zubair رضي الله عنهم and Aisha رضي الله عنها participate in the infighting and opposition between them. On the surface there seems to be no difference between the infighting of these illustrious Sahabah and that of the people of today, then should it not be admitted that the Prophet's company did not produce in them the effect which we expected them to imbibe?

The answer to this doubt or objection is not hard to understand. There is not doubt that the Sahabah as whole were certainly the stars of Hidayat (guidance) and the Prophet's company undoubtedly impressed upon them as much as it was expected. It is our lack of

understanding and the short sightedness of our hearts that causes us to harbor such doubts. It should be noted that the Shari'ah, the Islamic legal system, which the Prophet ﷺ brought contains fully all the principles for the welfare and prosperity of mankind. He (ﷺ) fulfilled his obligation of instruction and propagation of this complete and perfect Shari'ah. After him, there would come no other Shari'ah until the end of this world. As this Shari'ah is enjoined on us until the Day of Judgement, and mankind needs it for its reformation and welfare, therefore there must be a protection for this grand Shari'ah from the degeneration that befell other Shari'ahs (systems of law). Therefore, for the satisfaction of mankind Allāh Himself has said:

"We have, without doubt sent down the the Message and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)." It is clear that Allāh Himself will keep providing protection to it in accordance with the requirements of the time. During the last one thousand four hundred plus years, we have seen how Allāh Himself made arrangements for its safeguard. Just as we did nothing to propose and provide protection to ourselves when we were in our mother's wombs, just as we did not advise Allāh to raise vapor out of the sea, make clouds, blow wind and send down rain to keep our fields green, similarly how are we justified in proposing ways and making arrangements for the protection of the Islamic Shari'ah and dare to force Him to adopt a particular way and use the tools of our choice? We can wish ready made bread would rain down from the heaven, and cooked meat, fish or vegetable dishes be raised from the earth but Allāh cannot be our subordinate. He turned the seawater into vapor with the scorching rays of the sun, then the high air bore it and took it to another place, then its heat and freezing power created changes and caused the rain. Then the peasants made the land soft with the help of their oxen and equipment, and sowed seeds. Plants grew and they were looked after. When they ripened, they were harvested. Grain and chaff were separated. Then the grain was ground in a mill. It was kneaded and then by using a particular technique, bread was prepared. Contemplate it and see how in providing a loaf of bread Allāh has chosen a prolonged and complex process. It would only be our foolishness if we blame Allāh and prefer our proposed short cuts. Calling Allāh's work lengthy is nothing but our shortsightedness

because the countless benefits, which are present in this complicated process and series of efforts, are hidden from our short sight and imperfect understanding.

Keeping this concept in mind and you contemplate it, you must admit that the venerable Sahaba's internecine conflicts were in reality arrangements made by Allāh for the safety and protection of the Shari'ah, confirmation of the wisdom. The significant point is that the differences of opinion among Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه, Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه and other illustrious Sahabas were based on their Ijtihad (the pronouncement or understanding of the learned on an issue when Qur'an, Hadith, and Sunnah have not clarified this issue). If any of them were wrong, it was not intentional. None of them were the type of Muslims who could be persuaded to knowingly oppose the Islamic Shari'ah, Allāh's Commands or the Prophet's sayings.

Whatever Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه did, he thought it was right. Similarly, what Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه has done, he did it thinking himself justified. The same was the case with the other Sahabah. Whosoever they found justified, they favored that one, and all these occurrences happened in accordance with the Will of Allāh. By creating these inner conflicts and disputes, Allāh reserved a group of Sahabas for these affairs while the other group, disliked all of the dissension and infighting, and cut themselves off from governmental affairs and took to an ascetic life. When there were no internal disputes, all efforts of the Sahabas were put into resisting and facing the disbelievers and making victories on the battlefield. The regimes of Abu Bakr and Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنهما were full of such skirmishes and battles. All the Sahabas had their eyes fixed on the battlefield and the conquering of territory. Though during the caliphate of these two Sahabas, the work of the compilation of the Qur'an was done, it should have been completed at the beginning of the period. However, it was not feasible at that time for the required group of illustrious Sahabas to retire from jihad and concentrate all their attention and energy on ordering and organizing the Fiqh (science of the application of the Shari'ah), and protecting and propagating the Prophet's traditions. Madinah Munawwara had turned into a military cantonment with a camp that had its ruler sitting on a mat and before whom was always spread the maps of

war-strategies and great governors were seen engaged in determining specific martial policies and making plans and keeping watch on the movements of their commanders of the many armies that were deployed. As the circle of victories widened, these martial engagements increased, those who were teachers and gave lessons on the Shari'ah and explained its subtleties, became busy sharpening swords and straightening the feathers of arrows and making themselves prepared to face the blades of their enemies' spears. Those martial displays were very essential at that time in order to safeguard Islam and keep the Muslims fearless. During the caliphate of Umar bin Khattab رضى الله عنه these necessary military requirements were done and Islam came to be known as a victorious religion and the greatest military power. After that, the immediate requirement was to protect the perfect system of Islam and all aspects of the Shari'ah, and make available to the group of venerable Sahabas, the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, the opportunity and free time necessary to prepare a group of Taba'yeen, those who saw the Companions but did not see the Prophet ﷺ, in order to educate the future generations, and thereby preserving the Islamic way of life. Allāh with His Divine Power, created Abdullah bin Saba and his followers, a group of Jews appearing to be Muslims and made provision for the martyrdom of Omar رضى الله عنه, the battle of Jamal and the battle of Siffin each event after the other. The consequence was that many of the Sahabas who were the conquering heroes of their enemies like Rustam and Asfandiyar on the battlefield, put away their bows and swords and retired, and left the work of commanding military expeditions and became engaged in teaching. In the previous pages we have read how Sad bin Abi Waqas رضى الله عنه, the victor of Iran and under whose command the Muslims attained victory in the battle of Qadisiya, which had witnessed so much blood-shed, preferred to retire and take to tending flocks of goats and camels instead of participating in internecine disputes. This was also the case with many other Sahabas. When the series of victories stopped and internal differences appeared, many of the Sahabas began to regard the use of swords and arrows as bad. If this was not the case, there was no other possible way to remove them from the front row of the battlefield and bring them back to the rearguard.

Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه was the one person whose caliphate the entire Islamic world would have agreed to but the internal clashes forced him to live a life of withdrawal. In this book, we have read the same names of certain people many times, who were somehow involved in these disputes. However, there were a great number of Sahabas who did not take part in them and so their names are not mentioned in connection with these historical events. This dignified group, during that tumultuous times, enabled the people, who visited them with great respect in their hearts, to understand the reality of the Islamic Shari'ah and acquainted them with the character of the Prophet ﷺ. Each of them became a teacher in their own right and became busy educating others in the understanding of the Shari'ah.

Madinah Munawwara was the cradle of the Muhajirin and Ansar and Makkah was the second center of Islam due to Ka'bah. As long as the Sahaba did not have time for learning and teaching, Madinah remained the capital. When Allāh wanted to use the Sahaba for teaching Islam, He shifted the capital of the caliphate from Madinah, and Madinah, which only a short time before, was the center of martial power and military cantonments turned into a Dar ul-Ulum (Center of Knowledge). If we critically and minutely read the books on *Hadith* and *Fiqh*, the truth will be revealed that the primary material on *Hadith*, *Fiqh* and *Tafseer* is the gift of that age during which there were differences among the believers.

Had these differences not appeared and had Amir Muawiya and Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنهما not fought with each other, we would have been deprived of a major and essential part of the Islamic Shari'ah. But why did it start taking place? Allāh Himself is the Protector of this religion and He Himself makes provision for its safety. He decreed that there would be differences between Ali and Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنهما and the opportunities that followed.

Now we look at another aspect of this issue. Almost all the examples of obstacles, difficulties and complications that are possible for a government, sultanate or a system of culture to face, which have been witnessed in the world until now were present in the clashes between Amir Muawiya and Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنهما. In view of the emergence of these hardships, the morals and efforts that have been



displayed by the various rulers, ruling dynasties and kings, the most praiseworthy and the best of these morals and efforts are those of the venerable Sahaba in such situations. The history of the world is replete with the rise and fall of governments and nations, successes and failures. No age or regime is free from cunningness, conspiracies or deceptions. When we make research about these things, we find that the accounts of the clashes of Ali bin Abi Talib and Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه present the most honorable examples of all, and we can succeed by choosing the best style of functioning and the best guidelines for us. It is our blindness and misfortune that instead of making the Sahaba's differences in Ijtihad and the clashes of Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه and Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه a source of important lessons, insight and profit, we have turned them into tools for our disunity, bestiality, poverty and misfortune.

The lines mentioned above may raise the objection that the limitations of the writing of history have been trespassed. But I have already admitted that I am writing this book not as an atheist empirical historian but as a Muslim. I am a Muslim and it is for the Muslims that I have begun to write this book. Therefore, nothing can deter me from expressing this idea.

Now before closing the chapter on Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه we would like to quote the Honorable Syed Amir Ali, former chief justice of the High Court in Calcutta from his book entitled 'The History of Islam' using Masoodi as his reference: "Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه daily after Fajr prayer used to hear reports of the local superintendents of the military police or police captains. After that, he used to come to see the ministers, advisors, and chief associates of the government in connection with foreign expeditions. In this meeting the sub-ordinate court officials and administrators would read to him the reports and letters that came from the provinces. At Noon time he would come out of the palace to lead the prayer and sit down in the mosque itself. There he would listen to the complaints of the people, receive their requests and then go back to the palace and meet other dignitaries. Then he would take the midday meal and then take a short nap. After 'Asr prayer, he would meet the ministers, associates and advisors. He used to take supper in the court together with them all and give them



one more opportunity to see him and this ended the day's work." An interesting note about quoting the Honorable Amir Ali is that he has been considered as leaning towards the Shia faith and would in that case not normally attribute anything favorable to Amir Muawiya.

On the whole, during Amir Muawiya's regime, the series of conquests continued both within and without.

'Amr bin Aās رضى الله عنه says: "I have not seen a man of greater perseverance and humility than Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه. One day it so happened that I was present in his court and he was sitting with a pillow at his back. He received a report that the Roman emperor was about to attack with a huge army. Having read that paper, he threw it to me. I read it and waited to watch his reaction. However, he kept sitting in the same posture. He said nothing. A few minutes after that another report came that Nayel bin Qais, the leader of the Khawarij, had collected an army and was about to invade Palestine. This report was also passed to me and he said nothing. I read it and kept waiting for his order all the more anxious but he continued to remain in the same position. There was no trace of any change on his face. It was not long when a third report came to the effect that the Khawarij captives at Mosul broke open the jail and fled away and that they were collecting near Mosel. Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه read it also and threw it towards me and kept sitting with the support of the pillow at the back. A few minutes more and then another letter arrived with the news that Ali bin Abi Talib رضى الله عنه with a large army, was about to launch an attack on Syria. That letter was also thrown towards me. He maintained his position as before".

"My patience grew thin. I said to him, 'Pieces of bad news are pouring in from all sides. What will you do now?' He said, 'Though the Roman emperor commands a big army, he will return after signing an agreement with me. Nayel bin Qais fights for the cause of his religion. He has captured a city and wants to keep it under his control. I shall spare him so that he might be pre-occupied with it. The Khawarij who fled from the jail cannot escape from Allāh's jail. But as for Ali's affair, we have to think and plan how to avenge Uthman bin Affan's blood.' Then he sat up and immediately issued orders for the settlement of each issue, and then sat down with the pillow at his back."

Having watched Amir Muawiya's **رضي الله عنه** pomp and grandeur in Syria, Umar bin Khattab **رضي الله عنه** observed, "Just as there are Kisra in Persia and Caesar in Rome, similarly there is Amir Muawiya **رضي الله عنه** in the Arab land."

### Yazid bin Muawiya

When Amir Muawiya **رضي الله عنه** was the governor of the whole of Syria, Abu Khalid Yazid bin Muawiya bin Abu Sufyan was born in 25 A.H. or 26 A.H. His mother's name was Maisoon bint Bahdal who came from the tribe of Banu Kalab. He was very fat. His body was covered with a thick growth of hair. He was born into kingship and wealth. Amir Muawiya **رضي الله عنه** was a very scrupulous and far-sighted man. He paid special attention to Yazid's upbringing and education. He sent him to Hajj as *Amir-ul-Hajj* (Hajj group leader) once or twice and gave him the command of an army. He was commander of a part of the army at the time of the attack and siege of Syria. He was very fond of hunting. At the time of Amir Muawiya's death, he was not present in Damascus. He was sent for by messenger but failing to realize the seriousness of his illness, he went back to his hunting expedition. He returned after several days and offered the funeral prayer at his father's grave. He was also well versed in composing poems. In Amir Muawiya's lifetime *bay'at* for him was taken. But most people were unhappy with for this. A few great persons in Madinah Munawwara even refused to take *bay'at* for him.

Amir Muawiya **رضي الله عنه** committed a blunder by taking *bay'at* for Yazid in his lifetime that was probably the result of his paternal affection for him. But Mughira bin Shoba's blunder exceeded his, because the idea and the courage to act upon it came from Mughira bin Shoba's instigation. Hasan Basri has therefore said: Mughira bin Shoba created the opportunity of introducing a practice that put an end to consultation and the son started succeeding his father as king.

After Amir Muawiya **رضي الله عنه**, the Syrians, without any hesitation, took *bay'at* at Yazid's hands. The people of other provinces also followed their officials and dared not refuse for fear of the government. Immediately after taking the reins in his hands, Yazid wrote to the officials of all the provinces to take *bay'at* from the people

in his name. On that occasion Madinah and Kufa were governed by Waleed bin Utba bin Abi Sufyan and Noman bin Bashir respectively both were noble-minded and peace-loving persons; compared to other officials, they were less strict.

When Yazid's instructions were received in Madinah, Waleed bin Utba called the influential people of Madinah and read Yazid's letter to them. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه heard of Amir Muawiya's death and expressed his sense of grief and prayed for his forgiveness and asked Waleed not to make haste in taking his *bay'at* for Yazid. "I shall think it over and then decide." Marwan bin Hakam, the former governor of Madinah and advisor to Waleed bin Utba, encouraged Waleed to take Imam Husain's *ba'it* then and there and not to let him go. But Waleed did not agree with Marwan's counsel and postponed it to the next day.

Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه did not come to take *bay'at* for Yazid. He was called but he refused to come and asked to be granted time for one night. Waleed allowed him. Finding the situation compelling he, along with his family, departed from Madinah and leaving the main road, he set out along a little known path. The next day Marwan and Waleed took thirty armed persons with them and went to arrest ibn Zubair. But they did not find any trace of him. They returned in the evening because the whole day was spent in searching for ibn Zubair رضي الله عنه, no one thought of Imam Husain رضي الله عنه. The next night Imam Husain along with his family also left Madinah. The next day when the news of Imam Husain's flight broke out, Waleed said, "I shall not chase Imam Husain. It is possible that he might take up arms and then I might have to stain my hands with his blood which I do not want to do at any cost." Waleed, after the departure of these two persons, took *ba'it* of the people of Madinah for Yazid, there was no danger from Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه because he never wished to be caliph. Yazid also issued instructions that if Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه refused to take *bay'at* he should not be forced. Therefore, no one asked him to take the *bay'at*.

Abdullah bin Umar and Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنهما went to Makkah after a few days. Yazid had already sent Harith as an official to Makkah.

Abdullah bin Zubair and Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنهما entered Makkah at the same time. Immediately after seeing him Abdullah bin Safwan bin Umayya who was among the nobles of Makkah, took bay'at at his hands. Then about two thousand noble men and the influential people of Makkah followed suit by taking bay'at at Abdullah bin Zubair's hands. Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه put Harith under house arrest and took over the rule of Makkah. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه was also present in Makkah. He neither took ba'it for Zubair's nor did Zubair رضي الله عنه take bay'at for Imam Husain nor did he want to take ba'it from any of the members of his family. When Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه and Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنه visited Makkah, Abdullah bin Zubair did not wish them to take ba'it from him. Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه spent most of his time praying at the Ka'bah. Except for these few persons, the whole of Makkah took ba'it for him.

Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه often met Imam Husain رضي الله عنه and consulted him. It seems that Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه did not take bay'at from the people for the caliphate but took bay'at with the intention that Yazid should not be accepted as caliph and as long as the caliph was not selected unanimously by the Islamic world, he should be recognized as the governor of Makkah to maintain law and order. But Imam Husain رضي الله عنه did not appreciate Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه being in power in Makkah so he and the members of his family did not join him when he led the prayer.

Following these events, Marwan wrote to Yazid about how Abdullah bin Zubair and Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنهما left Madinah and that the people of Madinah took ba'it. Yazid at once removed Waleed bin Utba and sent Amr bin Sayeed bin Aas as the governor of Madinah. Amr bin Sayeed came and took control of the government of Madinah. Waleed bin Utba left Madinah and went to Yazid.

Harith bin Khalid was present in Makkah and did not venture out of his house, he sent Yazid the details concerning the capture of Makkah by Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه and his own captivity. Becoming aware of the conditions prevailing in Makkah Yazid wrote to Amr bin Sayeed: "Go to Makkah and arrest Abdullah bin Zubair and send him to me in chains." Amr bin Sayeed sent a strong army to Makkah. There was a confrontation and Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه was

victorious. The commander of the Madinah army was caught and imprisoned.

The inhabitants of Kufa, since the time of Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه, used to write to Imam Husain رضي الله عنه repeatedly to visit Kufa where they would take ba'it for his caliphate. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه knew more about the nature and habits of the people of Kufa, and at the time of his death, told Yazid as part of his last testament not to be cheated by them. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه also told Yazid that the inhabitants of Kufa would certainly encourage Imam Husain رضي الله عنه to rebel. If such a situation arose and he got the better of Imam Husain, he should treat him respectfully and leniently. Since Makkah was under the control of Abdullah bin Zubair, Imam Husain's thoughts were concentrated on Kufa. When Noman bin Bashir, the governor of Kufa, received Yazid's letter and the news of Amir Muawiya's death spread, the supporters of Banu Umayyad took ba'it with Noman bin Bashir for Yazid. But the supporters and followers of Ali رضي الله عنه and Husain رضي الله عنه, who had been trying to bring Husain رضي الله عنه to Kufa, hesitated in taking ba'it for Yazid and collected at Sulaiman bin Sard's house. All agreed that Yazid should not be recognized as caliph and Imam Husain رضي الله عنه should be brought to Kufa. While the secret consultation was going on, they heard that Imam Husain رضي الله عنه left Madinah and that the Makkan had selected Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه instead of Imam Husain رضي الله عنه and that Imam Husain رضي الله عنه had arrived in Makkah and furthermore that he had not taken ba'it for Abdullah bin Zubair. Therefore, they sent a letter to Imam Husain رضي الله عنه stating:

"We are your father's admirers and enemies of Banu Umayyah. We fought Talha رضي الله عنه and Zubair رضي الله عنه in support of your father. We created havoc in the battle of Siffin and made the Syrians acknowledge our superiority in valor. Now we are prepared to fight along with you also. Please leave for Kufa as soon as you read this letter. Come here so that we might kill Noman bin Bashir and hand over Kufa to you. One hundred thousand fighters are present in Kufa and all of them are ready to take bay'at for your caliphate. We believe that you are the rightful and worthy caliph. Yazid does not deserve to be caliph

in comparison with you. This is the time. Do not delay in the least. We want to make you caliph of the entire Islamic world by killing Yazid. Our elders have even stopped standing in prayer behind Yazid's official, Noman bin Bashir because we think you and your deputies to be worthy of the *Imamat* (Islamic leadership)."

When letters with similar contents started reaching Imam Husain رضي الله عنه in quick succession in Makkah, he called his cousin Muslim bin Aqil, whose father Aqil bin Abi Talib was one of Amir Muawiya's chief associates and advisors, and said to him:

Please go to Kufa secretly as my deputy. Live there privately, among the people of Kufa and take ba'it from them on my behalf secretly. Write to me the number and a few of the important names of those who take bay'at for me. Try to keep yourself concealed, and encourage those who take bay'at for me, and do not to start fight unless I am present.

Muslim bin Aqil, taking all precautions that Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه should not become aware of his movements, left Makkah. He thought a little on the way and wrote to Imam Husain رضي الله عنه: "I do not visualize that the consequences of these actions will be good. Please excuse me and send somebody else to Kufa in my place." Imam Husain رضي الله عنه wrote back to him, "Do not be a coward. You alone must go to Kufa." Muslim bin Aqil therefore continued to Kufa and in Kufa he stayed at Mukhtar bin Obeida's house. At once, the news spread among the follower's of Ali the group after group began to arrive and take ba'it. Muslim bin Aqil wrote to Imam Husain رضي الله عنه that he reached Kufa safely and how on the first day twelve thousand people took ba'it. On the very first day including 12,000 people Sultan bin Sard, Musaiyeb bin Najia, Raqata bin Shaddad, Harī bin Urwah took ba'it for Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه. Two persons named Qais and Abdur Rahman reached Imam Husain رضي الله عنه with a letter stating: "When you come and start taking ba'it openly, hundreds of thousands of people will take ba'it for your caliphate." Imam Husain رضي الله عنه was very pleased to read this letter and immediately sent back the bearers of the letter with word that he would be coming to Kufa very soon. Now Imam Husain رضي الله عنه, thinking that a good number of

supporters of Ali رضي الله عنه lived in Basra, sent a confidant of his with a letter to Ahnaf bin Malik and letters to the nobles of Basra, stating that they should take ba'it and proceed to Kufa at once.

When the news of Muslim bin Aqil's arrival in Kufa and people taking ba'it spread, Abdullah bin Muslim Al-Hadharmi called on Noman bin Bashir and said to him, O Amir! You should not show slackness in the caliph's affairs. Several days have passed since Muslim bin Aqil arrived in Kufa and he has been taking bay'at for the Caliphate of Imam Husain رضي الله عنه. You should kill Muslim bin Aqil or arrest him and send him to Yazid and punish those who have taken ba'it." Noman bin Bashir رضي الله عنه said, "I do not want to expose the work which they are doing secretly. I shall not attack them unless they come out for a fight." Hearing this Abdullah wrote the following letter to Yazid.

Muslim bin Aqil رضي الله عنه has arrived in Kufa and has been taking ba'it for the caliphate of Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه and the people have been responding favorably. Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه is also expected to come. Noman bin Bashir is showing weakness in this affair. If you want to keep Kufa under your control, send some strict governor to Kufa so that he might slay Muslim bin Aqil and suppress the ba'it and stop Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه from entering Kufa. If you delay, then deem Kufa to have gone out of your control.

Amara bin Oqba bin Abi Moeet also sent a letter to Yazid of similar content. These letters made him thoughtful and disturbed him very much. There was a man named Sarjoon who was a liberated slave of Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه used to seek his counsel on some complicated and important affairs to his great advantage. Yazid called him, and showing him Abdullah bin Al-Hadhrasmi's letter he sought his opinion. Here at this point, as a parenthesis it is worth mentioning that Yazid had always been displeased with Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan. After Zeyad, he resented and hated Obaidullah bin Zeyad. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه made Obaidullah bin Zeyad the governor of Basra. Yazid was thinking of removing him from that post and installing somebody else instead. When the horrible news from Kufa came, Yazid consulted Amir Muawiya's liberated slave, he said:



"At this moment, Iraq is about to go out of your hands. If you want to save Iraq, none other than Obaidullah bin Zeyad can help you. I know that you will dislike my counsel. But who ever other than Obaidullah bin Zeyad you send to Kufa as governor, he will not be able to save it. Furthermore, just as Amir Muawiya رضى الله عنه had assigned the governorship of both Basra and Kufa together similarly you should also assign him the dual charge and you need not select any other governor for Basra."

Yazid hesitated a moment after hearing this advice, and then wrote instructions to Obaidullah bin Zeyad.

"I hereby assign you the governorship of Kufa along with that of Basra. You should leave someone as your deputy in Basra and go to Kufa at once Muslim bin Aqil has been there taking ba'it for Imam Husain رضى الله عنه. Make him a captive or kill him and if those who took ba'it from him, refuse to recant their ba'it they should be put to death and by this way we will ward off all further dangers."

Obaidullah bin Zeyad was sure that Yazid was going to remove him from the governorship of Basra. He was surprised to read the contents of the letter. He was pleased as well as wary because that order obviously indicated a danger that Yazid might be trying to get him out of Basra by this pretext. Yet, he thought it necessary to obey the order. He made up his mind to leave his brother Uthman bin Zeyad in his place in Basra and he set out for Kufa the next day. Meanwhile Mundhir bin Al-Harith came running to him saying that Husain bin Ali's messenger had come and had been taking ba'it for Imam Husain رضى الله عنه and was doing it secretly. Obaidullah bin Zeyad through deception arrested Imam Husain's messenger and the next day collected the people and made this speech.

Husain bin Ali's emissary has come to Basra with his letters to a number of people here. I have arrested them. I have extracted the names of those people here who have received these letters and I have also prepared a list of those who have taken ba'it for Imam Husain رضى الله عنه. You know I am Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan's son. Muslim bin Aqil رضى الله عنه is in Kufa. I am going to him. I shall kill all those have taken ba'it



at his hands. If the whole of Kufa has entered into his ba'it, I shall spare none. At this moment, I make a concession to you that except for Husain bin Ali's emissary, I will not say anything to anybody. But if anyone speaks anything after I have left, it will not be good for him.

Saying this he brought Imam Husain's messenger and killed him in front of them all. No one made a sign indicative of disapproval. Satisfied with this act, he went to Kufa. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه sitting in Makkah thought that the people were taking ba'it for him in Basra but instead his messenger was actually being killed. Obaidullah bin Zeyad reached Qadisya and left his cavalry there, and along with his father's liberated slave rode a camel and rushed to Kufa and entered it in between Maghrib and Isha time. He purposely put on a turban like the people of the Hijaz. In the mean time, the people were waiting for the arrival of Imam Husain رضي الله عنه. The dominance of the followers of Ali and Husain were too great and Noman bin Bashir locked the doors of his court on that same evening, he sat with a selected few of those close to him and posted slaves at the door with instructions to first ask any visitor's name and address and if they deserved entry, they should be let in, if not, they should be refused. When Obaidullah bin Zeyad entered Kufa, the people thought that the man for whom they were waiting for, Imam Husain رضي الله عنه had arrived in Kufa. Wherever Obaidullah's camel passed by, the people they said: "Peace be upon you, O son of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم." Obaidullah reached the court on his camel. He found the door closed. He knocked at the door and said nothing. Noman bin Bashir رضي الله عنه was sitting on the roof with his friends. He rose and coming to the edge of the roof, looked down. As the entire city was awaiting Imam Husain رضي الله عنه, he also mistook Obaidullah to be Imam Husain رضي الله عنه. He said, "O son of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم! Please go back and don't create an evil disorder. Yazid will never hand over Kufa to you." Noman's friends who were sitting on the roof said to him, "Please don't be impolite to Imam Husain رضي الله عنه. At least open the door and let him in because he is coming from a journey directly to you as your guest." Noman bin Bashir said, "I do not like to give the people any chance to say that during Noman's regime Imam Husain was slain in Kufa." Obaidullah took off his turban and said, "O unfortunate one! Open the door at least." Hearing Obaidullah's voice, they at once recognized him. They

opened the door and then dispersed. He entered and after some time, his army, which he had left behind, started entering Kufa. At the same time, Muslim bin Aqil رضي الله عنه was informed of the arrival of Obaidullah bin Zeyad's army. He left the house where he had been staying, which was known to the people, and took refuge in Hani bin Urwa's house. By that time, the number of people who had taken ba'it at his hands in Kufa, had reached eighteen thousand. The next morning Obaidullah bin Zeyad spoke to the crowd and read Yazid's orders that came from Basra. Obaidullah said:

"My father is well known to you and also the style of politics that he used to practice. All his features are present in me. You know me also and I fully know the names, houses and freed slaves of each of you. You cannot hide anything from me. I don't like to shed blood in Kufa and kill you. I know that you have taken bay'at for Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه at Muslim bin Aqil's hands. I give protection to all of you provided you recant your ba'it and don't give shelter to those who are bent upon revolting otherwise every giver of shelter will be killed at his own door."

After this speech, Obaidullah asked about Muslim bin Aqil's whereabouts. No one answered. At last he was informed by his spies that he was hiding in Hani bin Urawa's house. Obaidullah gave a purse of three thousand dirhams to Maqal, a liberated slave of the Tamim tribe and and was unknown to anyone in Kufa, and told him to call at Hani bin Urwa's house and tell him, "I have to tell you something in private" and when in private tell him: "Such and such person of Basra has sent me to you and has given me three thousand dirhams to give to Muslim bin Aqil in Kufa and tell him that I have received a letter from Imam Husain from Makkah which asked me to go to Kufa on such and such date and that on that same date Imam Husain رضي الله عنه would also reach Kufa. Don't worry we shall enter Kufa along with Imam Husain رضي الله عنه and take this three thousand dirhams as a gift from us for your needs. So, please take me to Muslim bin Aqil so that I may give all these messages and this money to him and leave Kufa at once because Obaidullah bin Zeyad has arrived and as he knows me, I am in danger of being arrested".

Maqal took this purse and called on Hani. He was sitting at his door.

Hearing his message, he took him to Muslim bin Aqil. Muslim bin Aqil was glad to receive the purse and hearing the message saw Maqal off. Maqal came direct back to Obaidullah and told him that he had given the purse to Muslim bin Aqil and that he had talked to him. He was present in Hani's house. Obaidullah bin Zeyad called Hani and inquired about Muslim bin Aqil's whereabouts. He called Maqal and made him repeat his statement in front of everybody. Hani was ashamed and said,

"Yes, Muslim bin Aqil has taken refuge with me but I cannot bear the insult of handing him over to you".

Obaidullah arrested Hani then and there. The news spread in the city that Obaidullah killed Hani. Hani's women folk started lamenting. When Muslim bin Aqil witnessed all of this, he could bear it no more, he came out with sword in hand and he called all those who had taken bay'at at his hands. Only four thousand people out of eighteen thousand collected. He called the rest also but each of them answered. "At the time of ba'it it was agreed that we would not fight until Imam Husain رضى الله عنه arrived. You should also wait and watch until he comes." As Muslim bin Aqil came out, he could not go back into hiding again. He surrounded Obaidullah bin Zeyad with the four thousand people who responded to his call. Obaidullah bin Zeyad was at the governor's headquarters with thirty or forty people. They climbed on the roof and started showering arrows on those surrounding the place. The relatives and friends of Muslim bin Aqil's supporters began to persuade them to desist from their self-destruction. In short, all of them parted little by little until only thirty or forty supporters remained with Muslim bin Aqil.

### **Muslim bin Aqil and Hani bin Urwa Murdered**

Muslim bin Aqil رضى الله عنه in this situation fled from the place and took refuge in someone's house in Kufa. Obaidullah bin Zeyad sent Amr bin Jarir Makhzumi to arrest him. Seeing no way out Muslim bin Aqil رضى الله عنه drew out his sword. But Amr bin Jarir said to him, "Why do you ruin your life unnecessarily? Just surrender yourself to me and at my own risk, I will take you to Obaidullah bin Zeyad and promise that I shall get you pardoned." Muslim bin Aqil رضى الله عنه laid down the

sword and put his hands into those of Amr. He took him to Obaidullah. Obaidullah imprisoned him in the same room in which he had imprisoned Hani bin Urwa. The next day about ten thousand people who had taken *bay'at* collected and surrounded Obaidullah bin Zeyad's house. They demanded that Muslim bin Aqil and Hani bin Urwa should be released willingly otherwise, they would snatch them away by force. Obaidullah bin Zeyad ordered them to be taken to the roof and executed before their eyes. Both were therefore killed. Seeing the execution all of them dispersed as if they had only come for the purpose of getting their leaders killed. Obaidullah ordered the gate of the palace to be opened, their bodies were hung on a stake and their heads were carried off to Yazid in Damascus. Yazid wrote to Obaidullah bin Zeyad, "Imam Husain رضي الله عنه has set out from Makkah and is about to reach Kufa very soon. Protect yourself fully and depute the army to stop him on the way so that he may not reach Kufa."

### **Imam Husain رضي الله عنه Leaves Makkah**

Imam Husain رضي الله عنه prepared himself to leave Makkah. When everything was ready and the news spread that he was going to Kufa, all those who had love and sympathy with him came and insisted on his giving up his intention and tried to make him understand that leaving for Kufa was not free from danger. First Abdur Rahman bin Harith came and requested him not to go to Kufa because the governor of Iraq, Obaidullah bin Zeyad was present there. The inhabitants of Kufa are greedy and it is just possible that those who called you might come out to fight against you. Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه came and said to him, "Don't go out of Makkah to take *ba'it* and leadership. Allāh gave the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم the option to select either this world or the Hereafter. He chose the Hereafter. You also belong to the family of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Don't yearn after this world. Don't let yourself be contaminated with worldly filth."

Having exhorted thus Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه burst into tears. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه also began to weep but refused to act upon his advice. Being helpless Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه parted from him. Then Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنه said to him,

"Don't leave Makkah. Don't be away from the House of Allāh. Your

respected father preferred Kufa to Makkah and Madinah but don't you know how the inhabitants of Kufa treated him? They martyred him. They robbed your brother Hasan رضي الله عنه and ultimately poisoned him to death. You must not rely on them. Neither their *bay'at* nor their promise is believable nor are their letters and messages trustworthy." Hearing this Imam Husain رضي الله عنه said, "You are a hundred percent justified in what you say. But Muslim bin Aqil's letter has come. Twelve thousand people have taken ba'it. Before that one hundred and fifty letters from the noblemen of Kufa have also come. Now there is no danger. My visit to that place is the right thing." Hearing this Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنه said, "All right, at least let this month of Dhul Hijja end and the new year begin and then think of undertaking the journey. Now the season of Hajj is approaching and people from a far are coming to Makkah, and you are leaving Makkah and going out only for the sake of ruling over the worldly people and bringing into your possession the fortunes of the world. It is proper for you to participate in the Hajj and let the people return after performing Hajj, and even after that if you think it necessary, then you may set out." Imam Husain رضي الله عنه said, "The issue is such as I cannot defer it. I must set out at once." Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنه said, "Well, if you don't agree with me, at least don't take the women and children with you because the inhabitants of Kufa are absolutely unreliable. It was the duty of the twelve thousand people who have taken ba'it for your Caliphate to have first turned Yazid's administrator out of Kufa, taken the treasury in their possession and then called you. But in the present situation, it seems that they are incapable of doing anything against Yazid's administrator in Kufa. Now as they have neither the treasury nor the courage to drive the administrator out, this administrator might frighten or tempt them and use them according to his own will, and it is just possible that these people who are calling you, might jump onto the battlefield on Yazid's side to fight against you. Considered from this angle your life seems to be in danger. If women and children are also with you, then, just as Uthman bin Affan رضي الله عنه was slain under the very eyes of the members of his family similarly your family will also have to witness you being murdered and there is apprehension of their becoming slaves and slave girls after being arrested by your

enemies." When Imam Husain رضي الله عنه did not accept his advice, he said, "If you are so much interested in leadership and the caliphate, first go to Yemen. Your sympathizers also live there in good number. The chain of mountains can also be of great help in your protection. If you want the kingdom of Hijaz, you can get it very easily." At last, Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنه became quite helpless and Imam Husain رضي الله عنه did not accept even a single piece of his advice. Then Abdullah bin Zubair came and said to him, "Don't try to go to Kufa. Ever since your intention to visit Kufa has spread in Makkah, I have been hearing some people say that Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه will be very glad if Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه leaves because there would remain no rival in Makkah. I therefore, and in order to prove such misguided people wrong, request you with all sincerity to accept the kingdom of Makkah and out-stretch your hands so that I may take ba'it on them and go out into the battlefield to fight in obedience to your command." Imam Husain said, "Now I have informed them and have made up my mind to leave. I cannot postpone it any longer."

On the 3rd of Dhul Hijja 60 A.H. Munday, Imam Husain رضي الله عنه along with the members of his family left Makkah. On the same day Muslim bin Aqil رضي الله عنه was slain in Kufa. When Imam Husain رضي الله عنه was leaving Makkah, Amr bin Sâd bin Al-Aâs رضي الله عنه and other noblemen of Makkah came and wanted to stop him. They said, "If you do not agree, we will stop you by force and face you." Imam Husain رضي الله عنه said, "Do whatever is in your power to do and fulfill your wish of fighting with me also." Hearing this all of them opened the way and left. At the time of departure Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنه said to him, "I would have lain down before your camel so that it could not go ahead without trampling upon me. But I know that you will not stop even then and desist from the intention of going there." After he left Makkah, they met a caravan at Tan'lem, which was taking gifts to Yazid from the administrator of Yemen. He stopped that caravan and took some goods from it and moved on. In between Makkah and Kufa at Safah, he came across Farzdaq, the well-known Arabic poet, who was coming from Kufa. When Farzdaq left Kufa, Obaidullah bin Zeyad had not yet entered it. When Imam Husain رضي الله عنه made queries about the people of Kufa, he said, "Their hearts are with you but their swords cannot be flags in your support." He had

not gone far when Abdullah bin Jafar's letter, sent through his sons Aun and Mohammad from Madinah, reached him in which he requested him, in the name of Allāh, to desist from going to Kufa and come to Madinah instead because he apprehended danger to his life and because of this he must not be hasty in the matter. The messenger also handed over to him the letter from the governor of Madinah that said that if he wished to go to Madinah and settle there, he would be given all protection. But Imam Husain رضي الله عنه absolutely refused to return. He took Mohammad and Aun along with him and asked the escort, an inhabitant of Basra, to bring him to Kufa as soon as possible, so that he might enter the city before Obaidullah bin Zeyad's arrival there and because the people there were anxiously waiting his arrival. By chance on the same day Yazid's letter was also received by Obaidullah bin Zeyad asking him to protect himself and depute armed forces on every road and path because Imam Husain رضي الله عنه might be moving towards him and that he should be stopped from reaching Kufa. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه on the other hand, went ahead thinking that people were taking bait at Muslim bin Aqil's hands everyday and the group supporting him would be getting bigger. But the reality was that in Kufa Obaidullah bin Zeyad was busy selecting armed personnel for his arrest or execution. After a few days journey he met Abdullah bin Mutie. Finding out his intention, he insisted to stop Imam Husain رضي الله عنه from executing his plan and tried to make him swear to turn back to Makkah. He tried to make him understand that he should not be deceived by the Iraqis because if he wanted to take the caliphate from Banu Umayya, they would instantly kill him and feel encouraged in killing every Hashmite every Arab and every Muslim who supported him, and by destroying himself, he could dishonor Islam, the Arabs and the Quraish. But his speech was ignored by Imam Husain رضي الله عنه and he continued his journey to Kufa. From Hajr through Qais bin Mishar he sent a letter to the people of Kufa that he had reached near and that they should continue to wait for him. As soon as Qais reached Qadisiya, he was arrested by ibn Zeyad's soldiers. He was taken to him with the letter. He had him taken up to the roof of the palace of the Amir and thrown down. Qais died on the spot. Again, from the next stage of his journey, he sent his foster brother Abdullah bin Yaqtur, with a letter. He also met the same



fate. When that caravan reached Salba, they found out that Muslim bin Aqil رضي الله عنه had been killed in Kufa, and that not even a single supporter of Imam Husain رضي الله عنه was left in Kufa. That news threw a pall of gloom over the entire caravan and it intended to retrace its steps because in moving towards Kufa there was strong probability that the caravan would meet the same fate which Muslim bin Aqil had met. Hearing this Muslim bin Aqil's sons said, "We must not go back. We will avenge Muslim bin Aqil's murder or we will die as he died. Secondly, Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه is not like Muslim bin Aqil رضي الله عنه. When the people of Kufa see him, they will accompany him and arrest Ibn Zeyad." Several honored people were with the caravan and had joined it on the journey, they kept multiplying at each stage. However, after the news moved through the caravan the people of the tribes began slowly and gradually to take leave until only the members of Husain bin Ali's family and tribe were left. They were said to number seventy or eighty by some sources and about two hundred and fifty by other authorities.

## **The Disaster at Karbala**

Obaidullah bin Zeyad named Amr bin Sâd bin Abi Waqas the governor of Rayy and gave him four thousand soldiers to keep watch on all paths and roads into Kufa and to find out by which route Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه was coming and where was he camping. He also gave Hur bin Yazid Tamimi one thousand soldiers and put him on patrol. Amr bin Sâd started collecting information of different sources while he was camped at Qadisiya. Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه was in a dilemma and in that state, he reached Saraf. When he moved forward, Hur blocked him with his one thousand soldiers. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه went forward and said to him, "I have come here at your call. If you stick to your pledge, I will enter the city otherwise I shall go the way by which I have come." Hur said, "I have been ordered by Obaidullah bin Zeyad to stay with you and take you to him in our custody." Husain رضي الله عنه said, "It is impossible to bear the humiliation of going to him in custody." He then wanted to go back. Hur, out of fear of Ibn Zeyad, wanted to stop him and stood with his army on the way of his retreat. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه moved to north



and reached Qadisiya. He became aware that Amr bin Sâd, along with a large army, was camping there. Hur followed Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه. Following this discovery, Imam Husain رضي الله عنه left Qadisiya and after covering ten miles halted at Karbala. Amr bin Sâd was informed of his arrival and set out with his army and following him arrived at Karbala. After camping in same vicinity Amr bin Sâd left his army and came toward Imam Husain's camp and called for him. After exchanging greetings, Ibn Sâd said,

"Undoubtedly, you deserve the caliphate more than Yazid does but it is not the intention of Allâh to let both prophethood and caliphate come into your family. You have seen the circumstances and conditions of Ali bin Abî Talib رضي الله عنه and Hasan bin Ali رضي الله عنه. If you give up the thought of this sultanate and rule, you can easily become free otherwise your life will be in jeopardy and we have been ordered to arrest you."

Imam Husain رضي الله عنه said,

"I put three alternatives before you, you may choose any of them for me.

1. Let me go the way I came so that I may remain absorbed in prayer in Makkah.
2. Let me move to any border so that I may be martyred while fighting with the unbelievers.
3. Leave my way free and let me go to Yazid in Damascus. For your satisfaction, you may follow me. I shall go to Yazid and settle my affairs directly with him as my elder brother Imam Hasan رضي الله عنه did with Amir Muawiya.

Amr bin Sâd was very pleased to hear what he said and replied that he was not in a position to give him the final reply in this matter. He further said that he would inform Obaidullah bin Zeyad at once, and he was sure that he would agree to any of the three points. Amr bin Sâd was camped on the same plain he wrote to Ibn Zeyad a detailed account of the meeting, this took place on Muharram 2, 61 A.H. Obaidullah bin Zeyad was overjoyed reading Amr bin Sâd's letter. He said, "Imam Husain رضي الله عنه has spoken in a way that will put a stop

to all evil disorders and by going to Yazid he will take ba'it (the oath of allegiance), and then there will be no longer any danger." Shimir Dhul Jaushan was present there at the time. He said, "O Amir! You have an opportunity now. You may kill the Imam without hesitation. No one will blame you. However, if he goes to Yazid, you will no longer be honored and respected in comparison to him and he will be able to enjoy a greater status than you."

When Ibn Zeyad heard this, he wrote to Amr bin Sâd.

"All these three alternatives cannot be accepted. The one thing acceptable is: let Imam Husain رضي الله عنه surrender before me and take the oath of allegiance for Yazid at my hands as his deputy and then I shall send him to Yazid on my own."

On the receipt of this reply, Amr bin Sâd informed Imam Husain رضي الله عنه that he was helpless and said that Ibn Zeyad first wanted ba'it at his hands and did not agree to any other proposal. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه replied that it was better for him to die than take bay'at on Ibn Ziyad's hand.

Ibn Sâd was trying his best to avoid bloodshed. He wanted that either Imam Husain رضي الله عنه should accept Ibn Zeyad's conditions or Ibn Zeyad should let him go according to his wish. During the week long correspondences of refusal and insistence both Imam Husain رضي الله عنه and Ibn Sâd along with their men, remained camped on the field of Karbala. Imam Husain's men made their prayers with Ibn Sâd's soldiers and Imam Husain رضي الله عنه used to straighten the Saf (the rows of those praying). When Ibn Zeyad was informed of this, he became worried. Ibn Sâd might conspire with Imam Husain رضي الله عنه. He at once called in a herald named Jowira bin Tamîmi and gave him a letter for Ibn Sâd:

"I ordered you to arrest Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه. It was your duty to have arrested him and brought him to me. If you were unable to do so, you should have brought his head to me. I did not order you to join his company and promote friendly relations with him. Now it is better for you that immediately after reading this letter and without any hesitation either bring Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه to me or fight with him, cut off his head

and send it to me. If you hesitate even a little, then the bearer of this letter, who is a military officer, has been ordered to arrest you and bring you to me while the army should remain camped there and wait for the next commander whom I shall send in your place."

Taking the letter Jowira reached Ibn Sâd on Thursday Muharram 9, 61 A.H. Ibn Sâd was sitting in his camp at that time. As soon as he read the letter, he stood up, mounted on his horse and ordered his army to get ready and said to Jowira, "Bear witness that as soon as I have read the Amir's order, I have complied with it." Then he set the rows of soldiers and taking Jowira along moved forward. He sent for Imam Husain رضي الله عنه and acquainted him with the contents of the letter and the herald. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه asked him to grant one days' time. Ibn Sâd looked towards Jowira who said that the next day was not far and that he should be granted the time. Ibn Sâd returned from the field and ordered the soldiers to relax because there would not be any fighting on that day.

After sending his order through Jowira, Obaidullah bin Zeyad thought that if Ibn Sâd showed slackness and Jowira made him captive the army would become bewildered and scattered without their commander and just possibly they might join Imam Husain رضي الله عنه. In that case, it would be very a difficult situation and Imam Husain رضي الله عنه would have time to escape to Makkah and get out of their reach. He at once called Shimr Dhul Jaushan to him and said I have sent Jowira with the order that if Ibn Sâd hesitated, he should be arrested and brought to me. I suspect him to be a hypocrite. If Jowira arrests Ibn Sâd, the army will be in the field without a leader and may falter and be lost. I can't find anybody else better than you for this task. Go to Karbala and if Ibn Sâd is arrested, take command of the army, fight with Imam Husain رضي الله عنه and cut of his head and bring it to me. If Ibn Sâd is not arrested and is hesitant in fighting, go and start it and finish the work at once." Shimr said to him, "I have a condition. You know that my sister Umm Lambeen bint Haram was Ali's wife who bore him four sons named Obaidullah, Jafar, Uthman, and Abbas. They are present on the plain of Karbala along with their brother Husain رضي الله عنه. Give me protection for their lives. Obaidullah

bin Zeyad at once had a paper brought to him and wrote *Aman* – pardon and safety, sealed it and gave it to Shimr and sent him off.

Jowira left at night and early on Thursday morning reached the army at Karbala. Shimr left in the morning and reached at Asr time (late afternoon). He briefed him with all that occurred. Shimr said, "I would not have granted him even a single moment. Either get ready at once or hand over the army to me." Ibn Sâd sat on the horse and taking Shimr with him, went to Imam Husain رضي الله عنه and told him that Obaidullah bin Zeyad had sent another messenger and that he was not ready to grant him any delay in the battle. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه said, "Subhan Allâh, What is the necessity of granting me time now? The sun is setting. Won't you defer the fight to tomorrow?" Hearing that Shimr thought it proper to wait until the next morning and both returned to their camps.

## Water Banned

At night Obaidullah's order reached that if the fight had not started as yet the water sources must be captured and prohibited for Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه and his companions immediately after the receipt of the order. If the army had come under Shimr's command, the latter should comply with it.

Amr bin Sad, immediately after receiving the order, assigned five hundred horsemen to Amr bin Al-Hajjaj and stationed him near the Euphrates. Imam Husain's companions had not brought and stored water for themselves that day and all their containers were empty. When they went to fill them up with water, they realized the enemy had occupied the territory by the river. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه sent his brother Abbas bin Ali رضي الله عنه along with fifty men to get water by force. However, the tyrants did not let them take it. Now the agony caused by the intensity of thirst started increasing. That agony was more excruciating than arrows and swords could cause. Imam Husain's young son Ali bin Husain (Zain al-Abedeen) was lying ill in a tent when he and his sister Umm Kulthum, saw that the enemies would attack them in the morning and all their present relatives would be killed and martyred, they began to cry. Hearing them cry, Imam Husain رضي الله عنه entered the tent and told them that their

enemies were camping nearby and would be pleased to hear them cry and the companions would feel discouraged and that they should not lament. He silenced them only after a great effort and came out and said that he was surely wrong in bringing children and women with him and that they should not have been brought. Then he called all his companions to him and said, "You may leave and go wherever you think best. No one will hurt you because the enemies are concerned with me. Your leaving would be a benefit for them. I allow you to save your lives." His companions said, "We will never part with you. We will sacrifice our lives for you and as long as we breathe, we will not let any harm come to you."

Later that same night, a man named Tarmah bin Adi who was visiting the vicinity and had heard about Imam Husain's plight said to him, "Please come along with me alone. I shall take you along such a route that no one will know you have left. I shall then take you to the Tribe of Tai and give you five thousand soldiers from my tribe. You may use them as you like." Imam Husain رضي الله عنه said, "I have just told them to leave me alone and go. They did not accept it. How is it possible now to leave them alone and depart and save my life?" His companions said, "As you have just said, they will not hurt us because they are your enemies. For this reason, you must depart and save your life. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه said, I shall never go to save my life without you." He therefore sent off that man with thanks.

The next morning Shimr and Amr bin Sad came onto the field after the marshalling of the troops in battle array. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه also issued the necessary instructions to his companions and assigned them their positions. Shimr called Obaidullah, Jafar, Uthman and Abbas onto the field and said to them, "Amir Ibn Zeyad has given you protection." They said, "Allāh's protection is better than that of Zeyad's." Shimr was left looking pathetic. According to some traditions at the time when the battle started on the morning of Muharram 10, 61 A. H. seventy-two people were present on the side of Imam Husain رضي الله عنه. Yet, other traditions fix them at one hundred and forty and another at two hundred and forty. If we accept the maximum number, two hundred and forty, even then Imam Husain's companions were only a handful compared to the thousands of strong

and well-armed soldiers of their enemies.

Imam Husain رضي الله عنه set his companions in proper positions, gave them the necessary instructions and mounted on a camel and went to the troops of Kufa alone. He addressed them loudly and made a speech to them,

"O people of Kufa! I know quite well that this speech will not yield any results at this time and whatever you have to do, you will not desist from doing it. But I think it necessary to end by a plea to all for Allāh's sake and my excuse should also be made clear to you." He had hardly uttered these words when he heard the cries of women and children rising from his tents. He was very sorry to hear them. He interrupted his speech and said 'La haul ...' (There is no power except with Allah). He said, "Abdullah bin Abbas was justified in asking me not to take women and children with me. I committed a mistake when I did not agree with him." Then he went back and shouted to his brothers and sons to stop the women from crying and tell them to keep silent now and weep to their hearts content tomorrow. They pacified them and the women and children stopped crying. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه again resumed his speech to the soldiers of Kufa thus:

"O people! Let it be known to you who know me and also to those of you who do not know me that I am the grandson of Prophet ﷺ and the son of Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه. Fatima bint Prophet ﷺ was my mother and Jafar bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه was my uncle. Besides this genealogical pride, I have also another pride to my credit: that the Prophet ﷺ called me the chief of the Youths of Paradise. If you do not believe me, you may have it confirmed by a number of the Prophet's ﷺ companions who are still living. I never broke a promise, I never missed a Salat, I neither killed a Muslim nor did harm to any one. If Jesus' donkey was still alive, the whole of Christendom would be busy feeding and taking care of it until the Day of Judgement. What sort of Muslims and followers are you who want to kill the grandson of your Prophet ﷺ? You have neither the fear of Allāh nor are you ashamed on behalf of the Prophet ﷺ. As I did not kill anybody in my life, I do not deserve to be subjected to

retaliation. Tell me how have you concluded shedding my blood to be lawful. Having retired from worldly pursuits and disputes, I was staying in Madinah at the feet of the Prophet ﷺ but you did not let me live even there. I was then engaged in Allāh's worship in the House of Allāh in Makkah. You people of Kufa did not let me take rest there and continued sending letters to me stating that you think me the rightful claimant to the Imamate (leadership), and want to take ba'it for my caliphate. When I responded to your call and came here, you revolted against me. If you want to help me even now, I want that you should not kill me and let me alone so that I may go to Makkah or Madinah and become absorbed in prayer and Allāh will judge in this very world who was right and who was wrong."

All kept silent on hearing the speech and no one answered. After waiting some time Imam Husain رضي الله عنه said,

"Thank Allāh I have pleaded with you and you could not offer any response."

Then he called some of them by name, Shabt bin Rabiya, Hajjaj bin Al-Hasan, Qais bin Al-Ashas, Hur bin Yazid Tamimi, and others! Did you not write letters to me and call me insistently to this place and now when I have arrived here, you are adamant on killing me."

When they heard that, they told him that they had neither written letters to him nor called him. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه took out their letters and read them each separately, telling them these were their letters. They replied that whether they wrote him letters or not, now they were sick of him. After hearing that Imam Husain رضي الله عنه got off his camel and got ready for the battle. Someone came out of the troops from Kufa and onto the battlefield for single combat however, his horse became so frightened that the fighter fell off and died. Seeing that Hur bin Yazid Tamimi, posing as if he were attacking, put his shield before him and came running on his horse to Imam Husain رضي الله عنه and threw away his shield. When asked to explain the purpose of his coming in this way, he said, "I am the man who kept you surrounded and prevented your return and forced you to camp in this

field. Now, in order to expiate my fault, I shall fight against the soldiers of Kufa in your support. Please make a du'a (prayer) for my forgiveness, Imam Husain رضي الله عنه was highly pleased and made a du'a, for him.

Shimr said to Amr bin Sad, "Why do you delay now?" The latter at once put an arrow into his bow and shot it towards Imam Husain's رضي الله عنه troops and said, "Bear witness that I have shot the first arrow. Then two Kufan soldiers moved forward for single combat. From Imam Husain's رضي الله عنه side a brave man came out and killed both of them. In this way, the combat continued and many of the soldiers from Kufa were killed. Then from Imam Husain's side the men one after another moved forward and started attacking their enemies and many lost their lives. Imam Husain's رضي الله عنه companions did not let the descendents of Abi Talib come onto the battlefield until they all had died one by one. Finally, Muslim bin Aquil's son was the first of the descendents of Abi Talib to advance. Then Imam Husain's son Ali Akbar attacked the enemy heroically and after killing many of them he fell martyred. His martyrdom was too much for Imam Husain رضي الله عنه and he began to weep. After that his brothers Obaidullah bin Ali bin Abi Talib, Mohammad bin Ali bin Abi Talib, Jafar bin Ali bin Abi Talib and Uthman bin Ali bin Abi Talib attacked the enemies and after killing many they fell dead. In the end, Imam Husain's young son Mohammad Qasim attacked them but he also met the same fate. In short, for Imam Husain رضي الله عنه his own martyrdom and the other disasters at Karbala were not so great as his watching, with his own eyes, his brothers and sons being martyred and his daughters and sisters looking at such a gory and soul shattering sight. Imam Husain's companions and members of his family presented exemplary valor and displayed unprecedented loyalty and self sacrifice. None of them showed weakness or cowardice nor stood accused of disloyalty or of being hesitant. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه at the end was left alone. Besides the women, the only one left in the tent was Zain al-Abideen who was only a child at that time. Obaidullah bin Zeyad, the tyrant had sent orders that Imam Husain's head be chopped off and his body be trampled by horses until all the limbs were completely broken.



## **The Martyrdom of Imam Husain رضي الله عنه**

Left alone Imam Husain رضي الله عنه attacked the enemies so valiantly although none of his companions remained alive to observe the magnificence of his attacks. Amr bin Sad and Shimr were, saying to each other, "I have never seen such a brave and courageous man." The sum and substance of this tragic and soul withering tale is that Imam Husain رضي الله عنه received forty five wounds from arrows on his body but continued to face the enemy the entire time. According to another tradition, there were thirty-three wounds from spears and forty-three sword wounds in addition to those of the arrows. In the beginning, he was fighting on horseback but when the horse was killed, he began to fight on foot. None of his enemies wanted to kill Imam Husain رضي الله عنه with his own hands, rather all of them avoided and evaded him. At last, Shimr took six soldiers and attacked him. As a consequence, Imam Husain's left hand was chopped off and fell to the ground. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه wanted to attack them in response but his right hand was also so injured that he could not lift up the sword. Sanan bin Anas Nakhi speared him from behind and it passed through his abdomen. This spear wound caused him to fall to the ground. Sanan drew out the spear and with it Imam Husain's soul also was drawn out. *Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi rajiun* (To Allah do we belong and to Him is our return).

Then Shimr himself or at his instance somebody else severed Imam Husain's head from his body and in compliance with Obaidullah bin Zeyad's order, twelve horsemen were chosen. They had his sacred trampled and they returned to the tent and arrested his family. When Shimr saw Zain al-Abideen, the child, he wanted to kill him but Amr bin Sad prevented him from doing so. Imam Husain's head and his family were sent to Obaidullah bin Zeyad in Kufa. Considerable propaganda was made of them in Kufa. Ibn Zeyad called for the convening of his court and Imam Husain's head was presented to him on a platter. Seeing it, he uttered some impertinent remarks and then on the third day, he gave Shimr a division of soldiers and under his supervision, he sent the captives and the sacred head to Yazid in Damascus. When Ali bin Husain (Zain al-Abideen) and all the women

reached Yazid and when he saw Imam Husain's head, he burst into tears in the open court. He abused Obaidullah bin Zeyad and said that he had never order Summayya's son to kill Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه. Then addressing Shimr and the Iraqis he said that since he was always pleased with obedience, why did they kill Husain bin Ali رضي الله عنه. Shimr and his associates expected that Yazid would reward and honor them but he gave them nothing. On the contrary, he expressed his displeasure and ordered them to leave. Then he said to the courtiers: Husain's mother was better than mine, his grandfather the Prophet ﷺ is better than the other Prophets and is the chief of all of Adam's descendents. However, there was a quarrel between his father Ali رضي الله عنه and my father Muawiya رضي الله عنه. Similarly, we also fell out. Ali رضي الله عنه and Husain رضي الله عنه both used to say "Let he whose father and grand father was better be the Caliph." But they did not consider the verse of the Qur'an:

"O Allâh! Possessor of the kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom you will, and You take the kingdom from whom you will." (3:26)

Finally, it is known as to whom Allâh has favored.

Then, having released the captives, he kept them in his palace as honored guests. When the women went into the palace, they found that all the women there were crying just as Imam Husain's sisters were crying for their brothers and relatives. After a few days of royal hospitality, the ruined caravan left for Madinah.

Yazid provided them with all kinds of financial assistance and promised Ali bin Husain (Imam Zain al-Abideen) to give him any type of assistance whenever he contacted him.

### Obaidullah bin Zeyad's Frustration

Obaidullah bin Zeyad hoped that after the killing of Husain رضي الله عنه he would be honored. But Yazid, after the incident of Karbala, appointed Silam bin Zeyad the governor of Khorasan, he also put under him some provinces that had been attached with Basra, and sent him to Kufa, and gave him a letter written to Obaidullah bin Zeyad asking him to assign to Silam six thousands soldiers of Silam's

choice. Obaidullah took this as a negative sign and began to express sorrow at Imam Husain's loss, saying if he had been living, Yazid would have needed him and not have reduced his rank and status but now when Yazid became safe he started to take territory and soldiers from under his control. When Silam took command of the Kufan army, he asked the chiefs how many of them wanted to accompany him to Khorasan. Each of them expressed his desire to go with him. At night Obaidullah bin Zeyad sent his messenger to the chiefs of the army and asked why they preferred Silam to him. They replied that with him they had to stain their hands with the blood of the family of the Prophet ﷺ while with Silam they would be getting a chance to declare 'jihad' against the Turks and the Mongols. The next day Silam along with six thousand selected soldiers, left Kufa and went to Khorasan. Obaidullah bin Zeyad after the incident of Karbala, received nothing in reward but shame and sorrow.

### **The Events in Makkah and Madinah**

When Yazid ordered Amr bin Sad to leave Madinah and go to Obaidullah bin Zeyad in Kufa, he sent Waleed bin Utba again as the governor of Madinah in place of Amr bin Sad. It was Waleed bin Utba as the governor of Madinah who, at the insistence of Abdullah bin Jafar رضى الله عنه had written a document to the effect that if Imam Husain رضى الله عنه came to Madinah, he would be given safety and protection. Abdullah bin Jafar رضى الله عنه sent that document along with his letter to Imam Husain رضى الله عنه through the hands of his sons Aun and Muhammad while Imam Husain رضى الله عنه was on his way to Kufa. In Makkah Yazid's rule was overthrown and Abdullah bin Zubair رضى الله عنه was in power. When the news of Imam Husain's martyrdom reached there, he collected the people and made a speech:

"O people! No other people are worse than Iraqis and among the Iraqis, the people of Kufa are the worst. They repeatedly wrote letters and called Imam Husain رضى الله عنه to them and took bay'at for his caliphate. But when Ibn Zeyad arrived in Kufa, they rallied around him and killed Imam Husain رضى الله عنه who was a pious, observed the fast, read the Quran and deserved the caliphate in all respects."

Saying that much Abdullah bin Zubair رضى الله عنه burst into tears. The

people told him that then no one deserved the caliphate more than he. They requested him to stretch out his hands for *bay'at* and their acceptance of him as their Caliph. In that way, all the Makkans took *bay'at* for Caliphate at his hands. When the news reached Yazid, he had a silver chain made and sent it along with two persons to Waleed bin Utba in Madinah, he was informed that he should go to Makkah to put the chain around Abdullah bin Zubair's neck and arrest him. Later on, Yazid was sorry because he knew Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه was not the type of man to let it be put round his neck. Utba on his own did not comply with that order. Yazid continued to think of a way how to overpower Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه and at the same time save the Ka'bah from bloodshed. In Dhul Hijja 61 A.H., people from all corners of Makkah started pouring in. Waleed bin Utba, the governor of Madinah, was sent as leader of the pilgrimage from Yazid's side. From Makkah Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه was also the leader of the pilgrimage. In short, both performed Hajj, with their respective groups and neither of them opposed the other. Waleed bin Utba began to plan how to please Yazid by arresting Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه. However, Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه found out about Waleed's plan. When he had finished the Hajj, he wrote a letter to Yazid:

"Though Waleed is your cousin, he is a great fool. He is spoiling everything because of his foolishness. You should make some one else the governor."

Yazid was very impressed by that letter. He thought that Abdullah bin Zubair did not harbor any ill feeling in his heart against him and that he was not opposed to him. As Marwan bin Hakam had also sent such complaints to Yazid against Waleed, Abdullah bin Zubair's letter did not create any doubt about the truth of the matter in his heart. He therefore dismissed Waleed bin Utba and sent another of his cousins Uthman bin Mohammad Abi Sufyan as governor of the holy cities.

Uthman bin Mohammad came to Madinah and started drinking, which displeased the people very much. Uthman came to Madinah as governor in Muharram 62 A.H. After a few days, he selected ten persons and sent them to Yazid in Damascus. The delegation consisted of Mundir bin Zubair, Abdullah bin Hanzla, and Abdullah

bin Amr bin Hafs bin Mughira among others. When they reached Damascus, they were received with great hospitality by Yazid. He gave to the first two, one hundred thousand dirhams each and to the rest ten thousand dirhams each and saw them off. They had seen Yazid holding singing and entertainment sessions and indulging in unlawful activities in Damascus. While returning, they all made up their minds to make an all out effort to oppose Yazid's caliphate. Nine persons came from Damascus to Madinah and one Mandir bin Zubair went to Kufa because Obaidullah bin Zeyad and Mandir bin Zubair were friends. He intended to go to Kufa to see Obaidullah. When Abdullah bin Hanzla, along with his companions, came to Madinah, the people gathered round him to know about the conditions in Damascus.

### **Opposition to Yazid's Caliphate**

Abdullah said that Yazid did not deserve the caliphate in the least because he was seen indulging in unlawful acts and that it was doubtful if he was a Muslim. The Muslims should declare 'Jihad' against him. The people of Madinah told him that they heard that he was amply rewarded by Yazid. He replied that he accepted it simply because he had no power to oppose him. When they heard that, the people became very disgusted with Yazid. Abdullah bin Hanzla proposed the removal of Yazid. As a result of which, the Quraish made Abdullah bin Muti and the Ansars made Abdullah bin Hanzla their chiefs and denied and rejected Yazid's caliphate and rule. When Uthman bin Mohammad and all the Banu Umayyah, who numbered one thousand in Madinah, saw this, some of them went out of Madinah and some took refuge in the house of Marwan bin Hakam.

The people of Madinah arrested and imprisoned all the Banu Umayyah they could find. They said nothing to Marwan's son Abdul Malik who always lived in the service of Sayeed bin Almusayyeb the Schollor of Madinah and he rarely went out of the mosque and was considered to be a great devotee to religious practices, very pious and virtuous. Banu Umayyah informed Yazid in Damascus of the prevalent situation there. Yazid at once wrote to Obaidullah bin Zeyad that Mandir bin Zubair who had been to him in Kufa, should

immediately be arrested and imprisoned in order to prevent his entry into Madinah. As Obaidullah bin Zeyad was not pleased with Yazid because the latter did not value and honor him for killing Imam Husain, he sent Mandir away to Madinah at once and wrote to Yazid that Mandir had left for Madinah before he received his letter. After reaching Madinah, Mandir told Abdullah bin Hanzala and Abdullah bin Muti to take *bay'at* at Ali bin Husain's (Imam Zain al-Abideen's) hands for caliphate. He then went to Ali bin Husain with a group. Ali bin Husain frankly refused and said that both his father and grandfather had lost their lives for the sake of the caliphate and that he dared not run the risk of doing such a thing and killing himself. Saying so he went to stay in a village outside of Madinah.

Marwan, who along with other Banu Umayyah was imprisoned in his own house, sent a message to Ali bin Husain (Imam Zain al-Abideen) through Abdul Malik saying that what he did was quite right but he wanted some other help from him. He sent some valuable goods and members of his family to be looked after by him because there was no room for them in his crowded house. Ali bin Husain conceded to the request. Marwan bin Hakam, under the cover of a dark night, sent his family and some expensive goods to him in the village. Ali bin Husain (Imam Zain al-Abideen) wrote to Yazid the detailed situation of what was going on in Madinah. He wrote about himself that he was loyal to him and trying his best to support and safeguard Banu Umayyah. Becoming acquainted with the situation in Madinah, Yazid called Noman bin Basheer Ansari رضي الله عنه and told him to go to Madinah and make the people see reason, tell them to stop their evil activities and not to create the possibility of bloodshed in Madinah. He also asked him to pressure Abdullah bin Hanzala and mention that he visited Yazid, received gifts and rewards, returned highly pleased from there but then turned to be his enemy after coming to Madinah. By undoing the *bay'at* and issuing the religious judgment of Kufr (declaring him an unbeliever) against him incited the people and in so doing did not act wisely. He further asked him to go to Ali bin Husain رضي الله عنه (Imam Zain al-Abideen) with his message that his loyalty and achievements would certainly be honored and that he should tell the Banu Umayyah with him that they could not even suppress the 'fitna' (evil disorder) in Madinah by killing the two who created it. After

hearing about all these instructions, Noman bin Basheer رضى الله عنه mounted a female camel and proceeded to Madinah. There he tried to make the people understand that it was not in everybody's interest to make these problems, but in vain. Becoming frustrated he returned to Damascus and briefed Yazid with all that happened. Yazid called Muslim bin Qqba and ordered him to rush to Madinah along with one thousand selected cavalry and ask the people there to obey and in case of disobedience, fight them until they were humbled and disciplined.

Muslim bin Qqba replied that he was loyal but unwell at the time. Yazid told him that even in that state he was better than the other healthy persons and that no one else could do the job better than he. Compelled in this way, he selected one thousand soldiers and left from Damascus on the third day after he was ordered. Yazid, at the time of departure, urged him:

"Try to bring the people of Madinah to the right path with all possible soft measures. However, if you are convinced that such measures will not work, then I give you all the power not to be slow in causing bloodshed and slaughter. But be careful and see no harm is done to Husain bin Ali (Imam Zain al-Abideen) because he is loyal and a supporter. I have his letter, which says that he has nothing to do with the uproar and rebellion. If your condition deteriorates and rendering you incapable of commanding the army, you may depute Haseen bin Numair in your place. You may also make him your deputy."

After sending the army, Yazid sent a messenger to Obaidullah bin Zeyad with a letter asking him to take an army from Kufa and invade Makkah and eradicate Abdullah bin Zubair's disruption. Obaidullah wrote back that it was beyond him to do both things: he had already killed Imam Husain رضى الله عنه and that he would not ruin and lay the Ka'bah to waste. That work should be entrusted to somebody else. When Muslim bin Qqba reached near Madinah with his army, the inhabitants of the city told Abdullah bin Hanzla that Banu Umayyah who were in Madinah would side with the enemies if the army of Damascus came and thereby cause civil war, which would inflict a great loss on them. Therefore they argued, it was better that they should all be put to death before the arrival of Muslim bin Qqba. Abdullah bin Hanzla replied that if they killed Banu Umayyah, Yazid



and Obaidullah bin Zeyad with the Syrians and Iraqis respectively would invade them and demand revenge. He said it was better that all the Banu Umayyah should be called, make them swear neither to fight with them nor help the invaders against them and after that they should be turned out of Madinah. All agreed to the proposal. The proposal was executed accordingly with the only exception of Abdul Malik bin Marwan who was granted full liberty to remain in the city. The people who were turned out of the city came across the army of Muslim bin Oqba in Wadi al-Qura. Muslim bin Oqba asked them from which side he should launch an attack on Madinah. They refused to answer him in view of their pledge and pleaded helplessness in assisting him. Muslim bin Oqba wanted to know whether there was anybody among them who did not take any pledge. They said that Abdul Malik bin Marwan was such a man and he was in Madinah. Muslim said that Abdul Malik was young while he needed an old and experienced man well versed in the strategies of war. They told him that this young man was better than an old man. Muslim bin Oqba therefore sent someone to Madinah and contacted him. Muslim bin Oqba was stunned to hear his counsel and implemented it. He reached near Madinah and sent a message to its people: The caliph, Yazid, considers you to be noble. He does not like to shed your blood. You must obey or we shall be forced to take our swords out of their sheaths.

Having sent the message, Muslim bin Oqba waited for three days. The people of Madinah prepared to fight. At last Muslim bin Oqba invaded Madinah from the Harra side. The people of the city fought them valiantly and repulsed the Syrian soldiers. However, due to Muslim bin Oqba's valor and experience, the people of Madinah were defeated. Abdullah bin Hanzla, Fuzail bin Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib, Mohammad bin Thabit bin Qais, Abdullah bin Zaid bin Asim, Mohammad bin Amr bin Hazm Ansari, Wahab bin Abdullah bin Zama, Zubair bin Abdur Rahman bin Auf, Abdullah bin Naufil bin Harith bin Abdul Muttalib and many other leaders of Madinah met their end in that battle. The victorious army entered Madinah. Muslim bin Oqba continued a general massacre with looting and arson for three days. That battle and massacre saw one thousand people dead, which included three hundred noblemen of the Quraish and the Ansar. On the fourth day, he stopped the massacre and ordered them



to take 'bay'at. Those who took bay'at at Muslim bin Oqba's hands survived and those who refused were killed. It was on the 27<sup>th</sup> of Dhul Hijja 63 A.H. that Muslim bin Oqba entered Madinah as victor and issued the orders for a general massacre. On that very day, Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib was born. He is known as Mohammad Abul Abbas Saffah and is regarded as the first caliph of the Abbasids. Muslim bin Oqba made a hectic search of Mundir bin Zubair but he had escaped to Makkah.

### **The Siege of Makkah and Yazid's Death**

Freed from Madinah, Muslim bin Oqba with his army, advanced towards Makkah. He was ill and on the way his condition deteriorated and when it turned more serious at Abwa, he called Haseen bin Numer and made him commander in chief in his place, and died. Those who fled from Madinah also gathered in Makkah. The Khawarij also thought it worthwhile to help Abdullah bin Zubair who had arrived in Makkah. That year all the people of the Hijaz had taken 'ba'it' for the caliphate of Abdullah bin Zubair. Haseen bin Numer taking his army arrived near Makkah and sent a message to Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه to obey Yazid or he would invade Makkah. Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه made preparations for battle. His brother Mundir bin Zubair رضي الله عنه who came from Madinah was appointed chief of a section of Abdullah bin Zubair's army. It was he who first came out onto the battlefield and challenged the Syrians. In the initial fight, he killed several Syrians and then the full-fledged battle started. It continued until the evening without any tangible results. It started on Muharram 27<sup>th</sup> 64 A. H. The next day Haseen bin Numer set up a catapult on Mount Qubais and started targeting the Ka'bah and laid siege to Makkah. The siege and stone firing continued until Rabia al-Awwal 3, 64 A.H. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Rabia al-Awwal the Syrians made projectiles of cotton and sulfur and igniting them began to shower them on the Makkans. They burnt the Ka'bah's cover and blackened its walls. Two catapults were constantly launching stones and projectiles. It was difficult for the people of Makkah to venture out of their houses. The walls of the Ka'bah were broken under the impact of the flying stones and its roof caved in. The Syrians's that were making the siege became tougher, their total number after

reinforcements came to five thousand. The Syrians were continuing to launch stones on the House of Allah and the city while on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Rabi' al-Awwal Yazid died at Hawarin at the age of 38 or 39 after governing for three years and eight months. The news of his death first reached Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه. He shouted loudly to the Syrians: O unfortunate ones! Why are you fighting? Your leader who had gone astray is dead.

Haseen bin Numer did not give credence to it but attributed it to one of Abdullah bin Zubair's strategies. However, on the third day Thabit bin Qais Nakhye came from Kufa and informed him of Yazid's death, he at once ordered the army to raise the siege and march. Before his departure, he sent a message to Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه expressing his desire to see him at Batha.

In keeping with the terms of the agreement, Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه took ten persons with him and similarly ten persons accompanied Haseen bin Numer. Haseen said to him, "I am ready to accept you as caliph and take ba'it at your hands. I have five thousand Syrian warriors with me. They will also follow me. Please come to Syria with me and I shall persuade all the Syrians to take ba'it from you. All the people of Hijaz have already taken *bay'at* at your hands and after the Syrians the whole Islamic world will accept you as the caliph." Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه thought that he was being deceived, so he refused and said that so long as he did not have retribution against the Syrians, he would never forgive them. Haseen talked in a low voice while Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه replied loudly and roughly. Haseen said, "I want to give you the caliphate and you quarrel with me and reply in a rough voice." In short, Haseen left the place and returned to his army and ordered it to march. Later, Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه realized his mistake and he sent a messenger to Haseen asking him not to force him to go to Syria rather to take ba'it in Makkah. Haseen said, "The purpose would not be served if you don't come to Syria." In the end, Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه did not leave and Haseen departed from Makkah. When he reached near to Madinah, he came to know that upon hearing of Yazid's death the people in Madinah again stood against the Banu Umayyah and drove the governor who Muslim bin Oqba had deputed there out of

Madinah. When Haseen encamped near Madinah, the uproar in Madinah subsided and all the Banu Umayyah joined Haseen's army and requested him to take them to Syria with him. Haseen asked them to stay for the night promising to march with them the next morning. At night, he went out in search of Ali bin Husain. He met him and said to him:

Yazid is dead. There is no Imam of the world of Islam at present. Accompany me to Syria. I shall persuade the whole world to take *bay'at* for your caliphate. Don't take the Syrians to be like the Iraqis. They will never betray you nor will they harm you.

Ali bin Husain said: "I have made a pledge with Allah that I shall never take *ba'it* in my lifetime. Leave me alone and find somebody else for the caliphate." Having said that he parted from Haseen. Haseen returned to his army and taking the Banu Umayyah with him marched to Syria.

### **Conquests During Yazid's Reign**

We have reached Yazid's death but it remains to be mentioned that Oqba bin Nafe, the founder of the city of Qairwan (in modern day north-central Tunisia), had left North Africa and had gone to Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه in Damascus and complained against Abul Muhajir. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه had promised to send him to North Africa as the commander in chief. Death had overtaken Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه before he could fulfill his commitment. Immediately after becoming caliph, Yazid deputed Oqba as the commander and sent him to North Africa. Oqba reached Qairwan, arrested Abul Muhajir and threw him into prison. The reason was that Abul Muhajir, during his reign tried to defame him unjustifiably by abusing him. In that state of captivity Abul Muhajir died but before he died he warned him to beware of a newly converted Berber Muslim named Kusaila. It was Abul Muhajir who had convinced him about Islam and he knew his nature and habits, he was sure that because Oqba had imprisoned him, Kusaila, if he had the opportunity would certainly take revenge. Oqba did not pay much attention to it and he let him continue to be chief of one part of his army. In 62 A.H. Oqba called his sons and as his last will and testament, said to them: "I am going in the way of Allah for Jihad and

I wish earnestly to get martyrdom". Then he left Zuhair bin Qais Balwi with a small army for the protection of Qairwan and he set out along with an army of the *mujahideen* (Literally: those who struggle, connoting warriors fighting for the sake of Islam) to the west. There was a confrontation with the Roman army\* in the city of Baghana. After a sharp encounter, the Romans retreated. Again, the Romans fought them at the city of Arba and they also lost that battle. Seeing the onrushing flood of Muslim victories they allied themselves with the Berbers who had not yet converted to Islam. That huge army of Romans and Berbers stood their ground against the small Muslim army. After a bloody battle, the Muslim gained a decisive victory. Finally, they fought the last battle with the Romans at the city of Tangier in which the Roman governor surrendered himself to Oqba bin Nafe. Oqba set him free and without causing any damage to the city moved on. He conquered the entire territory of Morocco and he arrived at the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. Having reached the coast, he ran his horse into the sea and said,

O Allah! Had this sea not intervened in my way I would have gone on fighting in your way until the end of the earth.

## Martyrdom of Oqba

Oqba thought about returning to Qairwan. The whole of North Africa had been included in the Islamic conquests. On his return journey, he subdivided his army into various parts and sent them off separately and one part he kept with him. On the way, they reached a place where water was not available. They began to die from thirst and Oqba made a *du'a* (prayer) to Allah. His horse began to strike its hooves on the ground and amazingly a fountain shot up from that exact place. They all drank to their hearts content. It came to be known as 'Ma-ul-fars' (the water of the horsemen) and it is still known by this same name. When he set out with his small regiment and reached Hatuza, the Romans and the Berbers, seeing his small regiment wanted to fight even though they had already surrendered to him. Kusaila who was with Oqba took advantage of the situation, he parted with him and joined the Romans, encouraging his countrymen, and he led a large army on the attack and surrounded the small regiment.

The handful of Muslims unsheathed their sword and set to killing their enemies. They killed a large number of Romans and Berbers and made a pile of dead bodies and then they fell martyred one by one, and Oqba bin Nafe's longing for martyrdom was finally fulfilled.

Kusaila along with his large army marched towards Qairwan. When the news reached Qairwan that Oqba met his martyrdom and that a large army was approaching, Zuhair bin Qais made preparations for battle, but dissension and disunity broke out among his army. Qais failed to bring it under control. Compelled by this, the Muslims had to leave Qairwan and proceeded towards Bargah and Kusaila occupied Qairwan.

### **A Glance at Yazid's Caliphate**

Yazid reigned for about three years and nine months. During that period no territorial victories outside of North Africa came to the Muslims, to be more precise following Amir Muawiya's رضي الله عنه, 20 year long rule as caliph the period of infighting and indifference to foreign conquests had commenced. The greatest slur on Yazid's caliphate was Imam Husain's martyrdom, which has brought into prominence his other shortcomings. Considering these factors with the desire to get to the truth we should in going to the heart of the matter peacefully ponder over what were the motives working behind the tyranny perpetrated upon Imam Husain رضي الله عنه and the brutal treatment, which was meted out to him at Karbala.

It can not be denied that at the instance of Mughira bin Shoba رضي الله عنه, Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه nominated Yazid as his successor otherwise he would never have thought of making his son the caliph after him. It was Mughira bin Shoba who was the first to introduce that idea. Because that proposal was absolutely against the tradition of the 'Khilafat-Rashida' (the rightly guided caliphate) and the spirit of Islamic democracy, opposition to it started at once in Madinah. Therefore, Abdur Rahman bin Abu Bakr, Abdullah bin Umar, Abdullah bin Zubair and Imam Husain رضي الله عنهم opposed it vehemently. When Marwan put the problem before the wise and sober people of Madinah, it met with stiff opposition from all quarters.

Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه said clearly: "No other modes but those of the Prophet ﷺ and Khulfa ar-Rashideen will be acceptable to us in selecting the caliph. Commenting on it Abdur Rahman bin Abi Bakr رضي الله عنه said: the style which Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه has adopted in selecting the caliph is that of the Roman and Iranian emperors. It is not acceptable to us. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه said, "This selection is not meant for the betterment but for the annihilation of the Muslims because by this way the Islamic caliphate will be like that practiced by Caesar or Kisra, that is the son will succeed his father as king.

Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه in order to make them agree went to the extent of sending the following words to those wise people. You should accept him as caliph only in name. The rest of affairs, law and order, appointments and transfers of post-holders and other administrative activities will be done with your consultation. But even that failed to produce the desired result and none of them was ready to accept it.

Now imagine the sentiments of the common masses and the character of Yazid. Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه issued instructions to all his governors to narrate to the people Yazid's virtues and send to him delegations of the influential people so that he himself might have a direct talk with them on the issue. Consequently he talked to the delegations separately that came to him from all the provinces and then gathered them all at one place and made a speech in which he, after highlighting the rights and duties of caliphs, obedience to the rulers and the responsibilities of the common masses, mentioned Yazid's bravery, generosity, wisdom, suitability and administrative skill and finally expressed his wish that *bay'at* should be taken for Yazid's succession. However, in response a member of the delegation from Madinah, Mohammad bin Amr bin Hazam, stood up and said, "Amir al-Muminin! You are making Yazid the caliph but you should think about that you will have to answer to Allah for this act of yours on the Day of Judgement." These words amply prove that the people in general did not like Yazid's caliphate. Coupled with this that even at Amir Muawiya's death the type of disobedience he displayed throws light on how far he was fit for the caliphate.

With the joint efforts of Mughira bin Shoba and Amir Muawiya, Yazid

became the caliph of the Islamic world. Taking ba'it for Yazid in his lifetime was Amir Muawiyah's blunder and it was committed probably out of fatherly affection. But Mughira bin Shoba's mistake was worse than his because it only came to his mind at Mughira bin Shoba's suggestion. Furthermore, Yazid, after taking over the reign, failed to prove himself fit for the caliphate. He knew fully well that there were living elders who by virtue of their chaste habits and disposition, high morals, habits of worship, abstinence from material pleasures, their practical life and their strength of Iman were guiding lights, yet he did not take advantage of their presence. Instead of running his administration by availing himself of their counsel he began to perpetrate tyranny immediately after becoming caliph, and issued instructions to all his governors to take ba'it from all the elders present in Madinah and Makkah. When Imam Husain رضي الله عنه received the message, how could he, a man of such high status, take bay'at for Yazid? First of all his selection was out and out unlawful and his government was also unlawful. Secondly, from the viewpoint of deeds and character he was so debased that he was always engaged in amusement, fun, touring and hunting. He had appointed eunuchs to serve him, participated in singing and dancing parties openly, those and other character faults in him rendered him absolutely unfit for becoming the Muslims, caliph even for a single minute. How could Imam Husain رضي الله عنه accept him as caliph and take bay'at at his hands? These were the motives that compelled Imam Husain رضي الله عنه to oppose the illegal system of Yazid's reign. By his act against the unlawful government he lighted a lamp the light of which will continue to guide the caravans of the lovers of truth and justice until the Day of Reckoning. Imam Husain رضي الله عنه therefore mentioned this fact in his addresses he delivered at Karbala and during his journey. At Baida, he addressed Hur and his companions thus:

O people! The Prophet ﷺ has said, "One who sees a king who is a tyrant, makes lawful the things made unlawful by Allah, breaks his pledge made with Allah, opposes the sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ, rules over the slaves of Allah with sin and oppression and the onlooker is not ashamed at his speech and practice, then everyone is justified in throwing into Hell instead of the king in question." Understanding fully that these people (Yazid and his court) obeyed Satan and gave



up obeying Ar-Rahman (Allah). They have spread mischief on the earth, paralyzed the laws prescribed by Allah, taken the lion's share of the spoils of war, have taken the things Allah has made lawful and made them unlawful and vice versa and therefore I am justified in fighting according to the rules of Islam such misdeeds.

These were the causes that brought Imam Husain رضي الله عنه to Karbala. He and his family while uttering words of truth were martyred in their attempt to exterminate an unlawful system.

From the general view, Yazid was not a true successor to Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه. He had not much to do with religion and spiritualism. He did not display any merit in governance and politics. Had he been even a little discerning he would have first made an attempt to make the people forget the dispute between Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه and Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه. But he either did not pay much heed to it or failed due to his own character faults. The model of practical life that Yazid presented before the people also contained sins and unlawful acts, harmed the Muslim's religious outlook and their practical lives and people of weak Iman witnessing the royal model, felt emboldened to commit sins. It was Yazid's ugly example that provided impetus to the Muslims to take up singing, playing music otherwise prior to his display the Islamic world was absolutely free from these defects. Even up to Yazid's reign, the Muslims had not accepted the principle of caliphate by succession in government and politics. They knew that the act of Yazid succeeding Amir Muawiya as caliph was a gross mistake and it needed to be rectified. It was because of this that Haseen bin Numr wanted Abdullah bin Zubair to be the caliph. However, after Yazid's death the idea of succession was strengthened by the actions of Banu Umayyah and finally this evil practice took such a deep root that until now the Muslims have not been able to get rid of it.

Yazid was first married to Umm Hisham bint Utba bin Rabiya and had two sons, Muawiya and Khalid, by her. He loved Khalid more but he made Muawiya his successor. Then he married Umm Kulthum bint Abdullah bin Amir who gave birth to Abdullah bin Yazid who was well known for his excellent archery. Besides these, a few sons were born of his female slaves also.



## **Muawiya bin Yazid**

At the time of Yazid's death, Muawiya bin Yazid also known as Abu Laifa and Abu Abdur Rahman was twenty years and a few months old. He was young, pious and devout. The Syrians took *bay'at* at his hands after Yazid's death. When Haseen bin Numer along with his army and those of Banu Umayyah who left Madinah, reached Syria, the *bay'at* for him had already taken place. Muawiya was not interested in his own caliphate and the taking of *ba'it*. He was a little sickly also, and in that state of sickness, people took *bay'at* for him. He took *bay'at* under pressure and after forty days or according to a second tradition after two months and yet according to a third tradition after three months died as caliph. During that short period, he was not able to do anything worth mentioning. When his condition worsened, they requested him to nominate someone to be caliph after him. Muawiya said to them:

"I had no power to run the caliphate from the beginning. You made me caliph by force. I thought to hand it over to a person like Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه, if available but in vain. Then again, I wanted to do just as he had done and nominate a few persons entrusted with the task of selecting the caliph but I failed to find such persons. You are at liberty to make caliph anyone whom you like because I will have nothing to do with it."

Saying that Muawiya made the people leave his palace and had the doors closed. After that, it was not he but his dead body that went out of the palace.

### **Bay'at for Ibn Zeyad in Basra**

The caliphate of Muawiya bin Yazid was accepted only by the Syrians and the Egyptians. The people of the Hijaz had taken *bay'at* at Abdullah bin Zubair's hands. When the news of Yazid's death reached Iraq, Obadiullah bin Zeyad was present in Basra. He collected the people and said to them:

"The Amir al-Muminin is dead. There is no one in sight who has the capacity to run the caliphate. I am born in this country and I have

been brought up here. My father ruled here and at present, I am the ruler here.

The income of our territory is more than before. The treasury is stronger than before. Salaries and stipends given to the people are far more than before. The country is free from the presence of the mischievous and the wicked. You may establish your own separate caliphate if you like because you are not dependent on the Syrians."

Having heard the speech, everyone expressed their readiness to take *ba'it* at his hands. Therefore, the people of Basra took *bay'at* at his hands but in the heart, they did not like him. Taking *ba'it* from them, Obaidullah went to Kufa in order to take *bay'at* from the people there but they refused him openly. When the people of Basra came to know that the inhabitants of Kufa did not accept Ibn Zeyad, they annulled their oaths. Compelled and helpless Ibn Zeyad fled from Iraq and arrived in Damascus. He reached there when Muawiya bin Yazid had breathed his last, there were many disputes and the country was in an uproar of confusion in connection with the selection of the caliphate.

### **Ibn Zubair's Caliphate in Iraq**

The situation in Kufa showed that after the disaster of Karbala the people felt very moved by the martyrdom of Imam Husain رضي الله عنه. Those who called him by sending letters to him and then took part in killing him, felt very ashamed and repentant. Ibn Zeyad did not get any reward rather a part of Khorasan (corresponding to modern northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan) was taken from under his control and he too was repentant concerning Imam Husain's killing and did not stop the people of Kufa from repentance. The partisans of Husain in Kufa gathered at Sulaiman bin Sard Khazai's house and held a closed-door meeting, they confessed their faults and in order to expiate their errors agreed to the proposal to avenge Imam Husain's blood. Consequently, all of them took *bay'at* at Sulaiman's hands. He exhorted them to stick to their determination and avoid giving vent to it prematurely and gradually convert the people to their opinion and when the

opportunity presented itself, they would rise up and avenge his assassination.

When Obaidullah bin Zeyad wanted to turn the attention of the people of Kufa towards taking *bay'at* for him, they refused in keeping with Sulaiman's instructions and plans and they continued making preparations for taking revenge. Hearing of Yazid's death the partisans of Ali requested Sulaiman to rebel. But he asked them not to do so at that time because a good number of the people of Kufa were still not in favor of undertaking the work agreed upon and it was more prudent to keep trying separately for a few days more to increase their numbers and strength.

After rejecting Ibn Zeyad's proposal the people of Kufa drove out Amr bin Harith who was the appointed governor of Kufa by Ibn Zeyad and accepted Abdullah bin Zubair's caliphate. Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه sent Abdullah bin Yazid Ansari and Ibrahim bin Mohammad bin Talha as governor and tax collector of Kufa respectively. One week before the arrival of Abdullah bin Zubair's governor, Mukhtar bin Abu Obaida who had gone to Mohammad bin Al Hanafia, returned to Kufa. This took place in Ramadan 64 A.H. The people of Basra also made Abdullah bin Harith their chief after Ibn Zeyad's expulsion and in imitation of the people of Kufa, sent their delegation to Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه and recognized his caliphate. Thus, Abdullah bin Zubair's reign over the whole of Iraq was fully established.

### Ibn Zubair's Caliphate in Egypt

The Egyptian governor was Abdur Rahman bin Jehdan. When he heard the news of Muawiya bin Yazid's death, he at once took *bay'at*, (oath of allegiance) for Abdullah bin Zubair's caliphate through a delegation. Noman bin Basheer and Zafar bin Harith were the governors of Hims (also spelled Homs, city, central Syria) and Qansareen (one of the five original provinces that the conquering Arabs divided greater Syria into, now northern Syria) respectively. Both of them thought it proper to recognize Abdullah bin Zubair's caliphate on hearing about Muawiya bin Yazid's death. Because no caliph could be selected quickly after Muawiya bin Yazid's death, the

people of Damascus took *bay'at* for Dahhak bin Qais on the condition that they accept him as their Amir and Imam and obey him until the selection by the Muslims of the Amir and Caliph of all of them. Dahhak bin Qais also thought Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه alone to be superior to the others. The governor of Palestine Hassan bin Malik wanted the new caliph to be from the tribe of Banu Umayyah. In short at Muawiya bin Yazid's death the whole Islamic world had agreed to Abdullah bin Zubair's caliphate and with the exception of Banu Umayyah, all the rest of the influential people were determined upon finishing for good the matter of hereditary succession in connection with the caliphate and they wanted Abdullah bin Zubair as the caliph.

We have read about Obaidullah bin Zeyad's fate after Yazid in the previous pages. Now we will read about the fate of his brother Muslim bin Zeyad who governed Khorasan.

When the news of Yazid's death reached Khorasan, Muslim bin Zeyad said to the people that as Yazid was dead and so long as a new caliph was not selected and had not issued instructions, they should take *bay'at* for him. The people of Khorasan gladly did so but a few days after they nullified it. Muslim bin Zeyad also met the same fate, as his brother Obaidullah bin Zeyad in Iraq. Muslim bin Zeyad, deputed Muhallab bin Abi Sufra governor of Khorasan in his place, and intended to go to Damascus. He met Abdullah bin Hazim on the way and he appointed ibn Hazim, the governor of Khorasan, and Muhallab bin Sufra remained as the commander in chief as usual. Abdullah bin Hazim reached Khorasan and humbled and disciplined all the rebels. While the matter of the caliphate was being decided in Damascus in Khorasan Abdullah bin Hazim was fighting and defeating the Turks and Mongols and establishing and popularizing Islam.

Had Abdullah bin Zubair agreed to Haseen bin Numer's proposal and gone to Syria, there is little doubt that his caliphate would have been established and stabilized and after becoming the caliph of the Islamic World, he alone could have exterminated all the evils which had already taken deep root in the Islamic territories. However, it was not to be and the inevitable, which was against this, happened.

### **Marwan bin Hakam**

Marwan bin Hakam bin Abi Al-Aas bin Umayyah bin Abd Shams bin Abd Manaf was born in 2 A.H. His mother was known by the name of Amna bint Alqaman bin Safwan. He had been the head clerk and minister during Uthman bin Affan's رضي الله عنه period of caliphate. During Amir Muawiya's reign, he governed Madinah several times. Following Muawiya bin Yazid's death, it was Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه had been the caliph for six or seven months. With the exception of Marwan, none from among Banu Umayyah had a claim to the caliphate. All the governors and administrators had accorded recognition to Abdullah bin Zubair's caliphate. After struggling for six or seven months, Marwan succeeded in occupying Syria. Therefore, Marwan can be considered to be a rebel and as Banu Umayyah had lost the caliphate, he can be credited with the revival of the caliphate for Banu Umayyah.

### **Bay'at for the Caliphate and the Battle of Marj Rahat**

After Muawiya bin Yazid's death as mentioned earlier, there appeared two sects in Syria. One was Banu Umayyah who justified the caliphate on the basis that it belonged to their tribe alone, and the other comprising of Dahhak bin Qais, the governor of Damascus and his like minded officers and administrators who inwardly supported Abdullah bin Zubair's caliphate but kept silent. First of all Noman bin Basheer رضي الله عنه began to take bay'at in Hims in the name of Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه. The governor of Qansareen, Zafar bin Harith, also followed suit. In Damascus Banu Umayyah and Banu Kalb were in the majority. Those two tribes were like-minded and critical of Abdullah bin Zubair. Dahhak bin Qais who inwardly sided with Abdullah bin Zubair did not express it openly, ruled over Damascus. The inhabitants of Damascus were in the dark about the fact that the armies of Hims and Qansareen had taken bay'at for Abdullah bin Zubair's caliphate. It was, Hassan bin Malik Kalbi the governor of Palestine and a supporter of the Banu Umayyah due to his relation with them, got the information first. Making Ruh bin Zamba his deputy, he said, "The leaders of Ibn Zubair's army continue to take

bay'at for him from the people. The people of my tribe are in Jordan and I will go there to inform them. You must be vigilant here and kill those who oppose us." Having insisted in this manner he went to Jordan. Immediately after his departure, Nabil bin Qais, as a supporter of Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه expelled Ruh bin Zamba from Palestine. Ruh went to Hassan bin Malik in Jordan and Palestine was annexed to Abdullah bin Zubair's caliphate. Hassan bin Malik assembled the Jordanians and incited them against Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه and promised that they would try to make Khalid bin Yazid bin Muawiya bin Abi Sufyan the caliph. Hassan also came to know that Dahhak bin Qais, the governor of Damascus, was a secret follower of ibn Zubair but Hassan did not reveal it and chose another method to deal with this problem. Hassan using the strategy of politics wrote Dahhak bin Qais a letter containing the vices attributed to Abdullah bin Zubair and stated that Dahhak was the rightful claimant of the caliphate for Banu Umayyah. Further, he drew his attention to the fact that the people were continuing to take bay'at for Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه and asked him to remedy this at once. The messenger carrying the letter to Damascus was instructed that he should read the letter to Dahhak bin Qais in the central mosque on Friday before all the influential people of the city and the Banu Umayyah. The purpose of this was to create an obstacle between Dahhak bin Qais and ibn Zubair, to destroy Dahhak's credibility with Abdullah bin Zubair, and to cause confusion among Dahhak's followers.

At the mosque in Damascus, a large number of Dahhak bin Qais's followers were present. When they heard the letter, they were divided into two groups. One was the Banu Umayyah and their followers and the other was Abdullah bin Zubair's supporters. Both the groups clashed and they went to the extent of taking arms against the other and prepared to attack each other. However, Khalid bin Yazid bin Muawiya intervened and pacified them and prevented them from fighting. Dahhak bin Qais left the mosque silently and entered his house and did not come out for three days.

During that period Obaidullah bin Zeyad who had been expelled from Iraq and frustrated, had fled to Syria and arrived in Damascus.

His arrival in Damascus gave great strength to the Banu Umayyah and their followers. Dahhak bin Qais and Banu Umayyah together proceeded to Jabia. Thour bin Maan Sulami went to Dahhak and said to him, "You gave us counsel to take *bay'at* for Abdullah bin Zubair رضى الله عنه and we accepted it. And now at the instance of Hassan bin Malik Kalbi, you want to try to arrange the *ba'it* for his sister's son Khalid bin Yazid." Dahhak was ashamed and asked him what his opinion was. He said, "Express what you have concealed so far and invite the people openly to take *bay'at* for Abdullah bin Zubair."

Dahhak parted along with his supporters and halted at Marj Rahat. Banu Umayyah and Banu Kalb were stationed at Jabia. Hassan along with his followers also arrived there from Jordan. Five thousand of the Banu Umayyah and Banu Kalb had assembled at Jabia while Dahhak bin Qais had only one thousand of the Banu Qais at Marj Rahat with him. The deputy whom Dahhak bin Qais left in Damascus was expelled by Yazid bin Anis and took over the captured treasury, which was really a great defeat for Dahhak. Had Damascus and the treasury been in his possession he would not have suffered such a blow to his power. From Marj Rahat he sent inforMation to Noman bin Basheer, Zafar bin Harith and Nayel bin Qais in Hims, Qansareen and Palestine. The problem that came first before any other work for the Banu Umayyah was choosing the Imamate and caliph.

(Editors note: Imamate literally concerns leadership and Caliph connotes the representative of Allah on earth, this term is also used to describe all the sons of Adam and their position and responsibility while on this earth. These two terms cover the spiritual and temporal leadership of the Muslims and can be used interchangeably depending on the context as the concept of separation of the state from religion does not exist in Islam. In Arabic these terms and their derivations are commonly used and they are not terms that are exclusively used for this specific terminology only as the word Pope is in English.)

Khalid bin Yazid was named in general and the majority were inclined to him.

Marwan began to coax the people for his own caliphate and Ruh bin

Zamba in his support addressed the gathering in the following words:

Khalid bin Yazid is quite young now. We need a clever and experienced caliph. Therefore, none is better than Marwan bin Hakam. He is experienced and he has been doing the work of the caliphate and governing since the days of Uthman bin Affan رضي الله عنه. It is only proper that we select Marwan as our caliph provided that after his term, Khalid bin Yazid would be the caliph and after him Amr bin Sayeed Aas should be entrusted with the caliphate.

The choice of caliph remained under discussion at Jabia for forty days. At long last, Ruh bin Zamba's proposal with the support and effort of Obaidullah bin Zeyad, was approved and on 3 Dhul Qada 64 A.H. at Jabia, the Banu Umayyah, Banu Kalb, Ghassan and Tai tribes took ba'it at Marwan's hands. After the *bay'at*, Marwan leading his supporters moved towards Marj Rahat and encamped in front of Dahhak bin Qais. Marwan had 13,000 warriors while Dahhak had gathered four times more fighters. Both the armies set the right and left flanks in proper position and started a series of attacks. It continued for twenty days without any decisive battle being fought. At last, Obaidullah bin Zeyad drew Marwan's attention to the small number of their army and advised him that they should attack them at night. As both the armies had been forming normal battle lines and neither side seemed ready to launch a night attack, Dahhak and his soldiers were thoughtless and unconcerned. Furthermore, Marwan, during the day had sent a proposal of peace and requested them to stop fighting and no one should attack the other while the proposal of peace and terms was being negotiated. Therefore, the fighting had stopped. When the night came, preparations were a foot for the night attack in accordance with Ibn Zeyad's plan while Dahhak and his soldiers, being completely free from military duties, were relaxed or asleep. After midnight, Marwan's forces attacked from different flanks. The sudden attack resulted in the death of eighty leaders of Banu Qais and six hundred men of Banu Sulaim. Dahhak bin Qais was also killed and the rest fled where they could.

The fight in reality was a fight between Banu Kalb and Banu Qais. There had been a rivalry between them since the days of ignorance.



Islam made them forget their ancient feuds and Amir Muawiya رضي الله عنه made use of them intelligently and kept the old rivalry repressed. He had Yazid married into Banu Kalb so that he might continue to get their support. Banu Qais outnumbered Banu Kalb and so special care was also taken to entertain and keep them in good humor. These two tribes were regarded as the greatest powers in Syria. Just as Umar bin Khattab's death saw the revival of the old enmity between Banu Umayyah and Banu Hashim, similarly Amir Muawiya's death brought to life the old forgotten rivalry between Banu Qais and Banu Kalb. And the battle of Marj Rahat transformed the rivalry into a durable and permanent enmity and caused an irreparable damage to the cause of Islam in the Islamic world.

Following Muawiya bin Yazid's death, rivalries and differences of opinions between Banu Qais and Banu Kalb began to appear regarding the choice of the caliph in Damascus, Marwan bin Hakam seeing that Iraq, Egypt and a big part of Syria had already recognized Abdullah bin Zubair, made up his mind to leave Damascus, go to Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه in Makkah and take *bay'at* at his hands and avoid deferring the matter of recognizing his caliphate. When the uproar among the people in the central mosque in Damascus occurred, Marwan bin Hakam became quite hopeless of Banu Umayyah regaining the caliphate and he had packed his belongings to undertake the journey to Makkah. With the arrival of Obaidullah bin Zeyad in Damascus and his becoming aware of Marwan's intention, ibn Zeyad insisted on Marwan canceling his departure. It was the result of his efforts that *bay'at* for the caliphate of Marwan was taken and it was his strategy that led to the death of Dahhak bin Qais and the defeat of Banu Qais at Marj Rahat.

After the victory at Marj Rahat, Marwan came to Damascus and stayed in Amir Muawiya's palace. Immediately after his arrival there he, in accordance with Ibn Zeyad's counsel, married Khalid bin Yazid's mother in order to win the support of Banu Kalb and be free from the danger of Khalid bin Yazid's succession. Then he advanced to Palestine and Egypt and in the early days of 65 A.H. defeated all the followers of Abdullah bin Zubair, he either killed or banished them.

Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه committed a gross mistake in this case by not taking advantage of the favorable situations and events in Syria and failing to send reinforcements to his followers in time. He instructed his brother Musab bin Zubair رضي الله عنه to invade Syria but by that time the opportunity had already slipped through their fingers and hopes had already been shattered and hearts lost.

### **The Battle of Tawwabeen (penitents)**

It has been mentioned earlier that in Ramadan 64 A.H. Abdullah bin Yazid Ansari became the administrator of Kufa on behalf of Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه and that during the same time period Mukhtar bin Abu Obaida came to Kufa. Mukhtar began to incite the people to take retribution for Husain's blood. They told him that they had already taken ba'it at Sulaiman bin Sard's hands for this purpose but the suitable time for action had not yet come. Mukhtar said to them, "Sulaiman is a man of low spirits. He evades fighting. Imam Husain's brother Imam Mahdi Mohammad bin Al-Hanifia has sent me here as his deputy. You should take bay'at at my hands and exact recompense from his enemies." Hearing this they started taking bay'at for the Imam with Mukhtar. When Abdullah bin Yazid the governor of Kufa, received this news, he announced that if Mukhtar and his supporters wanted to revenge themselves on their enemies for the murder of Husain رضي الله عنه, they should co-operate in this mission otherwise if they took independent action, he would fight against them and punish them. The impact of the announcement was that Sulaiman bin Sard and his followers began to purchase arms openly and became busy preparing for the battle. On the first of Rabia al-Awwal 65 A.H. Sulaiman left Kufa and encamped at Nakhila with seventeen thousand warriors. Abdullah bin Yazid, the governor of Kufa, did not oppose him. Mukhtar was forming his own group for the same purpose of revenging the death of Imam Husain رضي الله عنه. Although Sulaiman harbored the same idea in his heart, Mukhtar expressed it openly, because of the open expression of his plan a few noblemen of Kufa instigated Abdullah bin Yazid to catch and imprison Mukhtar, which he did. Sulaiman along with seventeen thousand warriors advanced toward the Syrian border on the 5<sup>th</sup> of Rabia al-Awwal. At

the time of his departure, Abdullah bin Sad bin Nufail said to Sulaiman, "All the killers of Husain رضي الله عنه are assembled here in Kufa. Where are you going to search for them?" Sulaiman said, "These are soldiers who were at their chief Ibn Zeyad's command. He is the real culprit and first we should finish with him. Freed from this task it will be quite easy to straighten out the rest of the problem." After leaving Nakhila, Sulaiman's army reached Karbala where they wept bitterly at the place of Husain's murder and at his grave in which Imam Husain's headless corpse was buried. They halted there for a day and a night and then left. They continued their march and reached "Ain al Wardah" and encamped there. Hearing of their arrival Obaidullah bin Zeyad, who was at that time the newly appointed governor of Mosul and was personally stationed there, gave twelve thousand soldiers to Haseen bin Numer and sent him to face Sulaiman. Sulaiman had reached Ain al-Wardah on 21 Jumad al-Awwal 65 A.H., after camping there for five days Haseen bin Numer also arrived at Ain al-Wardah on the 26<sup>th</sup> of Jumad al-Awwal. The fight began on that same day. The Syrians suffered great losses until the evening but then night intervened and protected them. The next morning about eight thousand more Syrian soldiers sent by Ibn Zeyad came as reinforcements. That day also saw a fierce battle, which continued from Salat al-Fajr (dawn prayer) to Maghrib time (sunset) without yielding any final results. Both the parties passed the night in hope and fear. In the morning another ten thousand Syrian soldiers arrived as reinforcements sent by Ibn Zeyad to aid Haseen bin Numer's army. That day the battle continued until the evening. Sulaiman bin Sard and all the great leaders of Kufa were killed and only a few survived. The rest of the leaders took their remaining men and left the battlefield under the cover of darkness. Haseen did not pursue them. Sulaiman bin Sard and his associates were known as Tawwabeen (penitents) meaning that they had committed the crime of causing Imam Husain رضي الله عنه to be killed by betraying him and then became penitent and tried to compensate for it. That is why the Battle of "Ain al-Wardah" is also called the Battle of Tawwabeen. They were not the trained soldiers of any government but they had gathered there to kill Ibn Zeyad, the majority of them were sent to their death and only a few of them returned alive.

## **The Battle of Khawarij**

While at "Ain al-Wardah" the group of Tawwabeen (penitents) were engaged in fighting, in Basra the Khawarij were making preparations for battle against the governor of Basra, Abdullah bin Harith who had been appointed by Abdullah bin Zubair. The Khawarij of Basra and its vicinity gathered in Dolab at Ahwaz and revolted. Abdullah bin Harith deputed Muslim bin Obais bin Kareez bin Rabia to humble the rebels. Taking his soldiers Muslim bin Obais arrived in Dolab to fight the enemy. The Khawarij had made Nafe bin Arzaq their chief and commander. In Jummad al-Thani 65 A.H., Nafe bin Arzaq and Muslim bin Obais clashed at Dolab. Both the commanders Nafe and Muslim bin Obais were killed but the battle was not decided in any sides favor. The army of Basra made Hajjaj Bab their commander and the Khawarij made Abdullah bin Ahwar Tamimi their chief replacing Muslim bin Obais and Nafe respectively. When the continuing battle was still going on in full fury, the commander of the army from Basra, Hajjaj was killed. They made Harith bin Zaid their commander. Finally, the Khawarij gained victory and Harith bin Zaid along with the remaining Basra soldiers moved to Ahwaz fighting and chopping their way through to escape.

The Khawarij moved towards Basra as victors. When the people of Basra came to know about the victory of the Khawarij and the wretched plight of the Basra army, they were shocked. Immediately a fast messenger communicated the news to Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه in Makkah. Abdullah bin Zubair appointed Muhallab bin Abi Sufra the governor of Khorasan and dismissed Abdullah bin Harith from the governorship of Basra and appointed Harith bin Rabia to the post of the governor of Basra. When Harith bin Rabia assumed his post Muhallab bin Abi Sufra (one of the noblemen of Basra) wanted to go to Khorasan, the Khawarij soldiers and the flood of revolt had already reached near Basra. Harith bin Rabia wanted to make Ahnaf bin Qais the commander in chief of the army in order to face and stop the advance of the Khawarij. Ahnaf said, Muhallab bin Sufra was most suited to this work. Muhallab said, I am going to Khorasan as governor but I won't refuse to undertake this mission also provided I

am given enough money and material for the military expenses as well as the territories taken from the Khawarij will be declared to be my property."

Harith bin Rabia accepted his condition and Muhallab, taking twelve thousand selected warriors from the people of Basra, marched on to confront the Khawarij. The Khawarij fought a pitched battle and displayed exemplar bravery and turned their enemies faces several times. However, Muhallab's personal valor and experience benefited the people of Basra. The Khawarij were vanquished but they regrouped themselves and began to fight more carefully. Finally, the Khawarij, after a few more skirmishes, were defeated and they went towards Kerman and Isfahan.

### **The Siege of Qarqisa**

You have read earlier that prior to the caliphate of Marwan bin Hakam, Zafar bin Harith had been ruling over Qansareen. After Marwan's victory Zafar went to Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه and informed him of Marwan's occupation of Egypt. Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه sent him away as the administrator of Qarqisa, which was a border district between Syria and Iraq. Marwan after the Battle of Ain al-Wardah assigned Obaidullah bin Zeyad the task of ejecting Zafar bin Harith from Qarqisa.

Obaidullah laid siege to Qarqisa. Zafar bin Harith defended with great courage and determination. The siege and its defense prolonged until Obaidullah bin Zeyad received the news of Marwan's death and becoming discouraged about the success of the siege lifted it and returned to Damascus.

### **Succession of Marwan's sons**

Having ordered Obaidullah bin Zeyad to lay siege to Qarqisa, Marwan bin Hakam put all his effort into arranging the caliphate to go to his sons Abdul Malik and Abdul Aziz. He publicized the idea that Amr bin Sayeed bin Aas, who according to the original agreement that brought Marwan to the caliphate would be second in line after Khalid bin Yazid, said, "I will not allow Khalid bin Yazid to succeed

Marwan after his death rather I will take *bay'at* from the people for my own caliphate". The publicity made the people gossip. Taking advantage of this manufactured opportunity, Marwan by tempting and deceiving Hassan bin Malik Kalbi who was Khalid bin Yazid's greatest supporter, persuaded him to make the proposal that after Marwan, Abdul Malik bin Marwan and then Abdul Aziz bin Marwan be made caliph. Hassan bin Malik stood up in front of the general public in the central mosque of Damascus and said, "We have been hearing that the people will certainly quarrel about the matter of the caliphate after the Amir al-Muminin Marwan. In order to ward off this danger I put before you a proposal. I hope the Amir al-Muminin and the general Muslims will agree to it. The proposal is this that Amir al-Muminin nominate his sons Abdul Malik and after him, Abdul Aziz for the caliphate and take *bay'at* from the people for this. No one dared to oppose or contradict this proposal and immediately the people took *bay'at* for the succession of Abdul Malik and Abdul Aziz.

### **Death of Marwan bin Hakam**

The *ba'it* was against Khalid bin Yazid but all his supporters had already been won over by Marwan, he felt shocked and disappointed but he could do nothing about it. After this political victory, Marwan continued to damage Khalid bin Yazid's influence and popularity and went to the extent of humiliating and degrading him. However, even this failed to satisfy Marwan, who still considered Khalid as a possible threat to his political strategy, and he began planning his murder. Khalid complained to his mother, who was, Marwan's wife that Marwan was planing to murder him. His mother said, "Keep quiet I will take revenge on Marwan before he accomplishes it." She therefore persuaded four or five of her slave girls to murder him. Marwan came to the palace at night and went to bed. The girls in obedience to the order of Khalid's mother, stuffed linen into his mouth to suppress his outcries and strangled him to death. This happened in Ramadan 65 A.H. That same day the people took *ba'it* for Abdul Malik's caliphate in Damascus. Abdul Malik killed Khalid's mother in retaliation for Marwan's murder. Marwan was 63 at the time of his death. He had ruled for only nine and a half months.

## **Abdullah bin Zubair**

Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه and his situation and the circumstances of his caliphate have been recorded in the previous pages. As Marwan bin Hakam's death occurred during Abdullah bin Zubair's caliphate and as his caliphate continued even after Marwan's death, we thought it proper that Marwan bin Hakam's situation and circumstances be recorded after those of Yazid bin Muawiya and Muawiya bin Yazid to be followed finally by those of Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه. Abdul Malik succeeded to the throne and since the period of his rule and caliphate lasted even after that of Abdullah bin Zubair, the prevailing conditions and circumstances of his reign entitled Abdul Malik will follow that of Abdullah bin Zubair's. The period that began with the disaster at Karbala is as difficult to present as the period between 30 to 40 A.H. We are about to study a very dangerous age and in recording it, the chronology is difficult to maintain. The conditions are so complicated and confused that even if they are categorized outside of their chronological order it is not feasible to make them fit into a simple presentation. Even with these difficulties we have tried in comparison to other histories that this book should have more order and the readers should not feel over burdened mentally and so the reflection on the reality of these events should establish itself with more understanding in their minds.

### **Early life and Habits**

His genealogical table is as follows: Abdullah bin Zubair bin Awwam bin Khuwailid bin Asad bin Abdul Uzza bin Qussai. His familiar name is Abu Khubaib (Editors note: In Arabic it is endearing to refer to a man by the title of "father of" followed by the name of his first son. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ is called Abul Qasim and Ali رضي الله عنه is known as Abul Hasan. This is also applicable to a woman and she is entitled "mother of" and the name of her first son. In Arabic, this is known as kunya and has no English equivalent). Himself a Sahabi (companion of the Prophet ﷺ) he is a Sahabi's son. His father Zubair bin Awwam is counted among the Ashrat Mubashshireen (Literally: "The ten given good news," meaning ten companions of the Prophet

ﷺ who were given the good news that they would go to Paradise). His mother Asma was Abu Bakr Siddiq's daughter and Aysha Siddiq's sister. His grand mother was Safia who was the Prophet's paternal aunt.

Abdullah bin Zubair was born one year and 8 months after the Prophet ﷺ emigrated to Madinah. He was the first child born to a Muhajir (those who emigrated to Madinah) in Madinah Munawwara. His birth was highly celebrated by the emigrants because when the Jews saw that no child was born to an emigrant in Madinah for a long time, they publicized the idea that they had cast a spell over them and therefore no child could be born to the emigrants. That was why the Muslims were very joyous when he was born and it also caused as much grief, humiliation and shame to the Jews. He was taken to the Prophet ﷺ immediately after his birth. He ﷺ chewed a date and put a little in baby Abdullah's mouth.

Abdullah bin Zubair رضى الله عنه used to observe fast very often and would remain engaged in prayer. Sometimes he stood up in prayer and remained in that position for the whole night; sometimes he remained in ruku (bowing) for the whole night and sometimes he spent the whole night in sujud (prostration). He helped the needy especially his relatives. He was very brave and was a great general. His horsemanship was exemplar and a matter of pride among the Quraish. He was a man of great perseverance and stood like rock in the face of difficulties. He was a fine orator with a deep voice. His voice echoed and resonated as if he was in the mountains.

Omar bin Qais says, Abdullah bin Zubair رضى الله عنه had one hundred slaves who spoke a hundred different languages and he talked to each of them in their own language. Whenever anybody saw him do some religious deed, the observer would gather the impression that worldly desires could not have entered his heart even for a fraction of a second.

One day Abdullah Asadi called on Abdullah bin Zubair رضى الله عنه and said to him, "You and I are related to each other through such and such genealogy. Abdullah bin Zubair رضى الله عنه said, yes, you are right. But if you ponder, you will conclude that the whole of mankind is



interrelated because all of us have descended from Adam and Eve. Abdullah Asadi said, my funds have run short and I have no money to spend. Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه said, I did not stand as a guarantee to your funds. Asadi said my camel is dying of cold. Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه said, take it to some warm place and put some woolen cloth or a blanket on it. Asadi said I did not come to you to take counsel but to beg something. Accursed be the camel, which brought me to you. Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه said, curse the rider of this camel too.

### **Important Events of Ibn Zubair's Caliphate**

Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه had been reigning in Makkah since Amir Muawiya's death. He never allowed Yazid's rule to be established in Makkah during Yazid's regime. He took *bay'at* for the caliphate after Yazid's death and in a short time he was recognized as caliph by the whole Islamic world except for a few places in Syria. During that period, he did not take correct stock of the situation in Syria, which were in his favor but he failed to capitalize on them. He committed a mistake by under estimating Banu Umayyah's power and popularity, which had been established since Amir Muawiya's times in Syria. Had he correctly deduced the situation concerning Banu Qais's and Banu Kalab's dissensions and rivalries and his own popularity in Syria he would have undertaken a journey to Syria. There is a high probability that the journey would have proved as fruitful as Umar bin al-Khattab's journey to Syria for the Islamic world. In that case, Marwan's caliphate and the restoration of Banu Umayyah's influence and power would not have taken place. If he had made Madinah his capital instead of Makkah and came to Madinah immediately after Yazid's death, he would not have allowed Syria to slip through his fingers owing to its proximity it would have been easier to control. Had he done this, he could have prevented Dahhak bin Qais, Zafar bin Harith, Noman bin Basher and Abdur Rahman bin Juhdham from being vanquished. If these people had received a little support and help from him they were not the type of people who would retreat and accept defeat at any cost. The consequence of that error of misunderstanding was that Egypt and Syria coupled with Palestine went out of his control and Marwan founded the caliphate for his descendants.

## **Mukhtar's Mischief**

Mukhtar bin Abi Ubaid bin Masood Thaqfi has been mentioned in previous pages. When Sulaiman bin Sard appeared with the group of Tawwabeen to take revenge for Husain's murder, the governor of Kufa made him captive in order to maintain law and order due to his loud cries for revenge. When the remainder of the Tawwabeen returned to Kufa, Mukhtar sent a letter expressing his sense of sorrow to them.

"Don't be sad and rest assured that if I remain alive, I will take revenge for all of your martyred soldiers and Husain's death. I won't spare even a single killer and will cause such bloodshed that the people will be reminded of Bukht Nassr's times and how he killed Banu Israel. If there is anybody alive who wants to avenge Husain's death he should make a pact with me for this mission.

The letter was read by Rafe bin Shaddad, Muthanna bin Makhriba Abdi, Sad bin Hudaifa bin Yaman, Yazid bin Anas, Ahmar bin Sumait Himsi, Abdullah bin Shaddad Bajali, and Abdullah bin Kamul who were all from the group of Tawwabeen. They were beside themselves with joy that there was still a soul alive who had so much enthusiasm and dedication concerning Husain's death. Rafe bin Shaddad, therefore took four or five persons with him and visited the prison. Having gotten permission, he saw Mukhtar and told him that they would secure his release after breaking open the jail. Mukhtar said, No don't bother. I shall be free whenever I want the governor of Kufa himself will set me free. The time has not come. Wait for a few days more.

Mukhtar had sent a letter to Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه through a messenger from the jail before the vanquished Tawwabeen returned. The letter stated, "I have been imprisoned by the governor of Kufa, Abdullah bin Yazid. Would you please write a letter of recommendation to him. I have been wronged. Allah will reward you for it." Mukhtar was sure that Abdullah bin Umar رضي الله عنه would certainly recommend him and that he would be released. Concealing that reality, he spoke to Rafe about his release in such a way as to impress on him that he had spritual powers. After a few days

Abdullah bin Umar letter was received by Abdullah bin Yazid, and he, in respect to this letter, called Mukhtar from the jail and said, "I release you on the condition that you do not create any mischief in Kufa and keep yourself confined to your house. Mukhtar agreed and went to his house. Husain's supporters attributed his release to his miracle and began to visit him with great respect and faith. The faithful persons visited him secretly. A few days later Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه dismissed Abdullah bin Yazid and sent Abdullah bin Moti to Kufa as governor. Abdullah bin Moti arrived in Kufa on 25 Ramadan 66 A.H. Mukhtar also attributed the rise and fall of the governors to his miraculous power and after the departure of the old governor from Kufa, broke the restrictions imposed upon him and began to live more freely, more and more people began to visit him and the number of his followers started increasing greatly. Abdullah bin Moti had appointed Ayas bin Abi Mudarib as the city Magistrate. One day Ayas said to Moti, the governor of Kufa, Mukhtar's followers have become dangerous and powerful. I am afraid that he might rise against you. You had better put him in prison as before.

Abdullah bin Moti sent Mukhtar's uncle Zaid bin Masood Thaqfi along with Husain bin Rafe Azdi to Mukhtar asking him to come to him because he wanted to have an important talk with him. Both of them went to Mukhtar and conveyed the governor's message. He at once put on his clothes and was getting ready to leave when Zaid read the verse of the Qur'an,

"And when the disbelieves plotted against you to imprison you, or to kill you, or to get you out." (8:30)

No sooner had Mukhtar heard the verse than he at once made out what Zaid meant. He said, bring me a blanket. I am feeling cold. He covered himself with his blanket and laid down. Then addressing Husain bin Rafe he said "See I was ready to leave. But what can I do? I've had a sudden attack of sickness. Now I cannot move. Please narrate to the Amir the condition in which you found me. When I get well tomorrow morning, I shall comply with his order. Both of them left, on the way Husain bin Rafe said to Zaid, you read that verse so that Mukhtar would not go to the Amir otherwise he was ready to go.

He stopped because you wanted him to stop. He simply invented an excuse, commenting thus Husain said to Zaid, rest assured, I won't mention it to Abdullah bin Moti because I may get some benefit from Mukhtar. Both went to Abdullah bin Moti and said to him, Mukhtar was seriously ill. We have seen him with our eyes and he is unable to come here. Allah willing he will be coming tomorrow.

No sooner had Zaid and Husain gone than Mukhtar called a select few of his influential faithful followers and told them that they should not delay and should not wait any more they should rise in revolt at once. They said we are obedient to you. We are ready to abide by your decision but we should be given time for a week so that we may make our weapons ready and in order to finish our preparations for war. Mukhtar said that he did not expect Abdullah to grant him time for a week. Sad bin Abi Sad said, don't worry if Abdullah calls and imprisons you, we will have you released from the jail easily. Hearing that Mukhtar kept quite. They took him to an unknown place and hid him there. Then Sad bin Abi Sad said to the like minded people we should make inquiries before we revolt whether Mohammad bin Hanafia has really made Mukhtar his deputy for this work or not. If he is really deputed for taking *bay'at* on behalf of Mohammad bin Hanafia, we should rise in revolt under his command without any hesitation and if Mohammad bin Hanafia has not entrusted him with this task and he just wants to trick us, we should not have anything to do with him. Sad bin Abi Sad therefore took three or four persons with him and immediately left for Madinah. Having called on Mohammad bin Hanafia, they asked and were told in confirmation that he had really given Mukhtar the permission to avenge Husain's death. After the confirmation Sad bin Abi Sad came to Kufa with his supporters and briefed the people there. When they heard that, they got ready to take *bay'at* with Mukhtar and obey him.

When Mukhtar was informed that he was proved right, he was very pleased. Their doubts were thus dispelled. He instructed them to include in the group Ibrahim bin Malik bin Ushtur, one of the noblemen of Kufa, to ensure success of the mission. Amir bin Shurahbil, one of the followers of Mukhtar, went to Ibrahim bin Malik and said to him that during Ali bin Abi Talib's regime your father

achieved remarkable feats. The people have decided to demand compensation for Husain's death and a good number of people have agreed to it, you should be of the first of those to participate in it.

Ibrahim said that he could take part in it provided they made him their leader, Amir bin Shurahbil said, Mohammad bin Hanafia is in fact our Imam and he has made Mukhtar his representative. That's why we have taken *bay'at* at Mukhtar's hands. Ibrahim said that he himself would see Mukhtar. Amir bin Shurahbil returned and acquainted Mukhtar with all the facts. The next day Mukhtar took fifteen men with him and called on Ibrahim bin Malik who was sitting on his prayer mat at the time. Mukhtar turned to him and said your father was a man of reputation who was among the supporters of Ali bin Abi Talib. We consider you also to belong to our group and our group to belong to you. Imam Mahdi Mohammad bin Al-Hanafia has sent me as his deputy. You should take *bay'at* at my hands and I promise that on getting success, you will be given the post of your choice. The associates attested to the promise. Ibrahim at once stood up from his mat and made Mukhtar sit in his place and took *bay'at* at his hands. Mukhtar returned after the *bay'at*. The next night on Rabia al-Awwal 14, 66 A.H. Mukhtar sent his man to Ibrahim with the message, "I have made up my mind to revolt. You too should come to me along with your group." Ibrahim's men kept assembling until midnight.

Through his intelligence network Ayas bin Mudarib was informed that a rebellion would break out that night. He in turn informed Abdullah bin Moti and asked him about the right way to curb it. He counseled him saying, Kufa has seven districts, you should depute a body of five hundred soldiers in each district. If anybody is seen out doors, he should be either arrested or killed. This proposal was duly executed. A chief was sent to each district in order to prevent the people from assembling on the roads and paths. It was by sheer chance that when Ibrahim was on his way to Mukhtar with his men that he happened to confront Ayas bin Mudarib. Both sides attacked each other and Ayas bin Mudarib was killed by Ibrahim. On the other side, about four thousand supporters had collected around Mukhtar's house. They had to confront a second division of the government

army. From one side Ibrahim reached Mukhtar's house fighting and pushing and from the other side came the soldiers from all the other districts. They all began to fight in front of Mukhtar's house. Ibrahim defeated the government army and forced them to retreat. Abdullah bin Moti arrived with more fresh troops. Now Ibrahim and Mukhtar pushed Abdullah bin Moti into Dar-ul-Emarat (the headquarters of the Amir), and then Abdullah bin Moti pushed them back and out of Kufa. The fight continued throughout the night. With the prolongation of the fight, Mukhtar's supporters kept increasing as new people kept coming and joining. Finally, Abdullah bin Moti was forced to remain besieged in his headquarters, Mukhtar continued the siege for three days. The number of people inside the headquarters of the Amir was so many that the accommodations were insufficient and foodstuff was also in short supply. Abdullah bin Moti went out by a hidden tunnel and concealed himself in Abu Musa Ashari's house. The rest asked for peace and opened the gates of governor's house. Mukhtar took possession of the headquarters and the treasury and distributed a large amount of money among his supporters. The inhabitants of Kufa then assembled at the central mosque. Mukhtar delivered a sermon and coaxed them to recognize Mohammad bin Hanafi's leadership. Consequently, they pledged to follow the Book (Qur'an) and Sunnah (traditions of the Prophet ﷺ) and sympathize with the descendants of the Prophet ﷺ. Mukhtar also promised to treat them courteously. After the collective *bay'at*, he came to know that Abdullah bin Moti was hiding in Abu Musa Ashari's house. He sent one hundred thousand dirhams to him and gave him a message, I have been informed that for want of provision for the journey you are staying at Abu Musa's house please accept this one hundred thousand dirhams pack up your belonging and leave Kufa within three days.

Abdullah bin Moti was highly ashamed and so he did not go to Makkah. He went to Basra instead. At the time when Sulaiman bin Sard's supporters came to Basra after their defeat there was a man named Muthanna bin Makhrama Abdi of Basra among them. After going through Mukhtar's letter they visited the jail to see him. This has been mentioned earlier. Muthanna at once took *bay'at* at Mukhtar's hands and Mukhtar sent him to Basra with the instructions

to take ba'it from the supporters of Ali bin Abi Talib رضي الله عنه on his behalf and increase the number of his men and revolt in Basra when he began the revolt in Kufa. Muthanna therefore began to take ba'it from the people secretly and built up a group with him.

When Mukhtar intended to revolt in Kufa, he had informed Muthanna in Basra who followed suit on the same date. At the time, Basra was governed by Harith bin Abi Rabia on behalf of Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه. Harith did not let the rebels see their plans materialized. He besieged them in their district and expelled them out of Basra. They left Basra and went to Mukhtar in Kufa. In this way, Basra was saved but Kufa went out of the control of Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه. Mukhtar established his domination in Kufa and befriended its noblemen. He made a few flags, signifying different future campaigns. He was planning to occupy others cities of the Islamic territories. He handed a few flags over to Abdullah bin Harith bin Ushtur and sent him to Armenia, he gave flags to other commanders to occupy other cities of the Islamic territories. He handed a flag over to Mohammad bin Umair bin Otarid and sent him to Azerbaijan, he gave yet another to Abdur Rahman bin Qais and sent him to Mosil followed by one to Ishaq bin Masood to take Madayen and another to Sad bin Hudaifa bin Yaman to capture Halwan. Abdullah bin Kamil and Shuraih were made the city magistrate and judge of Kufa respectively. His officers met with success everywhere with the result that the people recognized his reign and took ba'it. Only Mosil could not be brought under control by Abdur Rahman bin Sayeed because there Obaidullah bin Zeyad was deputed governor by Abdul Malik bin Marwan. Abdur Rahman halted at Takrait instead of Mosil and sent the inforMotion to Mukhtar. He deputed Yazid bin Anas for the expedition and giving him three thousand horsemen sent him towards Mosil. When Obaidullah bin Zeyad heard the news of Yazid bin Anas' arrival, he sent Rabia bin Mukhtar Ghanwi to fight him. There was a confrontation between the two at Babil on 9 Thul Hijja 66 A.H. Rabia was killed and the Syrian army suffered defeat. When the vanquished Syrian soldiers were retreating, Abdullah bin Jumla Khash'amu was seen coming with three thousand soldiers that Obaidullah bin Zeyad had sent to help Rabia. Abdullah stopped them, took them with him



and the next day, 10 Thul Hijja on Id-ul-Adha day attacked the army from Kufa. That battle also ended in victory for the soldiers from Kufa and the defeat of the Syrians. The victors captured several thousand Syrians and killed them by the order of Yazid bin Anas and that same evening Yazid bin Anas who had been ill died, but not before making Warqa bin Azib the supreme commander of the army.

The next day Warqa was informed by his spies that Obaidullah bin Zeyad himself was coming to wage battle. As soon as he heard his name, Warqa left Babil and came to Iraq, halted and wrote to Mukhtar, "Because I had a very small army, I had to retreat". That news made the authorities of Kufa condemn Warqa because how could he adopt the strategy of a defeated army after having been victorious. Mukhtar gave Ibrahim bin Malik bin Ushtur seven thousand troops from Kufa and ordered him to take all the soldiers that had been under the command of Yazid bin Anas and put them under his own command.

After Ibrahim's departure, some of the people of Kufa called on Sheeth bin Rabi and complained that Mukhtar did not honor them rather misappropriated and violated their rights. Sheeth told them that he would talk to Mukhtar and hear his statement on this matter. When he went to Mukhtar, he was told, I am ready to do every duty in consultation with the people of Kufa and let them share in the booty provided they agree that they will fight Banu Umayyah and Abdullah bin Zubair رضي الله عنه until their power is reduced to nothing. Sheeth said that he would first talk to those who had sent him. Now in Kufa there were people who had taken *bay'at* at Mukhtar's hands long before he came to power. They were all his allies and shared his views and faith and he made great allowances for them. Similarly, there were those who had simply taken *bay'at* for the sake of obedience by recognizing his rule. They did not share his opinion and were not in favor of taking revenge for Husain's blood. It was they who had grievances against Mukhtar. Therefore, at Sheeth's return they staged a demonstration against Mukhtar and reaching governor's house (at this time Mukhtar's headquarters) they said to him, we dismiss you. Give up your rule because you are not the deputy and caliph of Mohammad bin Hanafia." Mukhtar acted discreetly and foresightedly and tried to make them understand, saying, I don't want to be strict with you.



I forgave you for killing Husain (رضي الله عنه) and you will be given all concessions. We are in a state of war with Banu Umayyah at the moment. You must keep away from creating mischief or it will not be good for you. Go and think over it deeply because the work for which you have made up your mind to do will have disastrous consequences."

Their chiefs agreed to Mukhtar's suggestions at the time and promised to think it over. Their reason for agreeing was to allow Ibrahim bin Malik enough time to get as far away from Kufa as possible so that he would not be a danger to them. Mukhtar also was thinking of Ibrahim and felt his helplessness in Ibrahim's absence, he therefore sent a fast camel-rider to Ibrahim with the message to come back to Kufa in the shortest possible time. He fortified the Amir's headquarters and settled in there firmly. The people laid siege to it the next day. The third day saw Ibrahim returning to Kufa with his army. He started killing those who rose against Mukhtar. In short, there remained not even a single house in Kufa, which had not lost one, two or more persons. Mukhtar assembled all the people and had a list prepared that contained the names of those who were present in Ibn Zeyâd's army at the time of Husain's murder or who took part in Karbala's disaster in one way or the other. 'Amr bin 'Sad and Shimr Dhul-Jaushan were also arrested and put to death. 'Amr bin Sa'd received a promise of safety from Mukhtar, but Mukhtar violated his pledge and had him beheaded. His son Hafs bin Amr stayed in Mukhtar's company. When Amr bin Sad's head was brought to the court, Mukhtar said to Hafs, "Do you recognize whose head it is?" Hafs said, "Yes. I do and after this my life is bereft of pleasure." Mukhtar ordered his head to be chopped off immediately, and his order was carried out. In brief, the series of arrests and killings continued for several days. The people were brought after being arrested in their houses and were executed. Mukhtar sent Amr bin Sad's and Shimr's heads to Muhammad bin Hanafia in Madinah.

Mukhtar was a very prudent and clever man. Having occupied Kufa, he wrote a letter to Abdullâh bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) stating: "I am at the Amir's headquarters in Kufa. I obey you and recognize your caliphate from the core of my heart. Please make me the Governor of Kufa."

Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) at once realized that he wanted to come into power and this was a ruse to deceive him and keep him unmindful of his seditious activities. He decided to test Mukhtar's obedience so he sent Amr bin Abdur Rahman bin Harith bin Hisham Makhzumi to Kufa with the written command of Amr's governorship of Kufa. When Mukhtar came to know of it, he sent Zaid bin Qodama with five hundred cavalry and seventy thousand dirhams to stop Amr bin Abdur Rahman on the way and send him back giving him the money as compensation. He further instructed that in case he refused he should be arrested. Amr bin Abdur Rahman at first refused to accept it but when he saw the strong army of five hundred, he thought it wiser and expedient to accept it. He therefore left for Basra with the money. Abdullah bin Moti had also gone there and now Amr bin Abdur Rahman joined him there, the governor of Basra at the time was Harith bin Abu Rabia.

### Mukhtar's claim to Prophethood and Ali's chair

When Ali (رضي الله عنه) lived in Kufa, he had a specific chair that he used to sit on and often issued orders from that seat. His sister's son named Jadah bin Hubairah, the son of Umm Hani bint Abu Talib, lived in Kufa and the chair in question was in his possession. Having established himself as the ruler in Kufa, Mukhtar tried to take possession of this chair. Jadah said to him, "Please give me a week's time so that I may find it and give it to you." Mukhtar said, "I could never give you more than three days time. If you fail to bring me the chair within the stipulated time, I will deal harshly with you."

In Jadah's district there lived a dealer of oil. He had a similar chair with him. Jadah purchased it from him and took it home secretly. He cleaned it, wrapped it in a cover and took it to Mukhtar with great formality and care. Mukhtar accepted the chair, rewarded him well, kissed it, and put it in front of him and performed the prayer. Then he convened a meeting of his followers and said to them, "Just as Allah made a chest the source of victory and prosperity for the children of Israel (Editors note: This is a reference to the Ark of the Covenant), similarly He made this chair a symbol for the followers of Ali (رضي الله عنه). From this day forward we will become victorious everywhere."

His followers rubbed their eyes on it, kissed it, and bowed their heads before it. Then he ordered a cabinet to be made for the chair. An attractive cabinet with a silver lock containing the chair and with guards assigned for its protection was put in the Grand Mosque in Kufa. Whoever went there for prayer kissed it. Much before his coming to power in Kufa, Mukhtar had started spreading his net of deceit and enslaving the masses with his supposed extraordinary spiritual powers. After gaining power in Kufa, his cunningness in this way was easier to perpetrate. Slowly and gradually, he was moving in a direction to make a claim to Prophethood.

When Mukhtar captured Kufa and wrote to Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه), Abdul Mâlik bin Marwân approximately during the same period gave an army to Abdul Malik bin Harith bin Hakam bin Abul Aas and sent him to Wâdi-ul-Qara for a few days. It was to be the first invasion on Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) by Abdul Malik bin Marwan. Having heard the news of the invasion, Mukhtar wrote a second letter to Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه). "If you want I shall send an army from Kufa for your support." Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) answered: "If you send an army as an obedient person, send it towards Wadi-ul-Qara". Mukhtar handed over a three thousand man army to Shurahbil bin Wars Hamdani with the instructions that he should go directly to Madinah, write to him about the state of affairs there and comply with the orders which he would send to him later. His purpose was to please Muhammad bin Hanafia by sending an army to Madinah, which would not be objected to by Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) and which would also enhance his influence among Ali's supporters.

Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) understood these clever ploys by Mukhtar. When he answered Mukhtar's letter Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) assigned to Abbâs bin Sahal two thousand soldiers instructing him that if Mukhtar sent an army from Kufa, it should first be ascertained whether it was coming as an ally or as rebel forces. If obedient, it should be used; if not, it should be sent back. If it refused to go back, it should be faced. Abbâs and Shurahbil met at Raqeem. Abbâs said to him, "Accompany us to Wadi-ul-Qara to face the enemy." Shurahbil said, "We have been ordered to go directly to

Madinah. There we shall await another order and then we will be able to move." Abbās first entertained the Kufans with delicacies. And then as punishment for refusal, he launched an attack on them and compelled Mukhtar's three thousand men with his two thousand men, he killed seventy of them and sent the remainder back to Kufa. Mukhtar took advantage of it and wrote a letter to Muhammad bin Hanafia complaining against Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه). "He did not let my army reach you, which I had sent in your support. Now it is important that you send your chief confidante to me so that I may send a strong army with him and the people will be honored and graced with the sight of your messenger." Muhammad bin Hanafia replied expediently, "I am aware of your love of truth. You should leave me alone in peace and avoid shedding the blood of Allāh's creatures. Had I been desirous of ruling and becoming a leader, I would have rallied around me more people than you have. However, I have dismissed and abandoned all my supporters and the final decision rests with Allāh."

### **Obaidullah bin Zeyād was killed**

It has already been mentioned that the Kufans defeated the Syrians on Eid al-Adha day in 66 A.H. but the Kufan general had retreated as soon as he was informed of the advance of Ibn Zeyād. Hearing that news, Mukhtar had sent his commander in chief, Ibrahim bin Malik bin Ushtur with seven thousand soldiers but as mentioned Ibrahim had to return to Kufa. People were massacred in large numbers in Kufa and all those who were opposed to Ali's supporters, were completely crushed, which averted and prevented such dangers in the future. Having been relieved of that situation, Mukhtar sent Ibrahim bin Malik from Kufa on an expedition to confront Ibn Zeyād on 22 Dhul-Hijjah 66 A.H. At this time Kufa was in no danger of any uprising, as the people were extremely terrified, the influential and important leaders were sent along with Ibrahim. The cabinet containing the chair was also dispatched. The purpose was to instill confidence in the army of its victory in advance.

Ibrahim bin Malik crossed the Iraqi border with terrific speed and entered Mosul where Obaidullah bin Zeyād was governing on behalf

of Abdul Malik bin Marwan. Hearing of the approaching army, Obaidullah left Mosil and both the armies encamped at a place adjacent to the Khazir. After passing the night and performing Salat al-Fajr (the pre-dawn prayer), they attacked each other. It was a bloody battle. Signs of defeat were visible on the Kufan side but Ibrahim bin Malik's courage and perseverance made the Kufans stand firmly. The commanders of both sides displayed feats of valor but ultimately the Syrians suffered defeat and their general Obaidullah bin Zeyad was killed. Along with him the next great Syrian chief, Haseen bin Numer, was also killed by Sharik bin Jadid Taghlibi. When the fight was over and the Syrians were either killed or driven away, Ibrahim bin Malik said to them, "I have killed a man near the canal under the flag whose clothes give off the scent of musk. My sword has cut him into two parts. Go and see who he was." They went there and found that it was Obaidullah bin Zeyad. His head was cut off and the body was consigned to flames. Along with the celebration of victory Obaidullah bin Zeyad's head was also sent to Mukhtar in Kufa.

### **Najdeh bin Amir Captures Yamamah**

Najdeh bin Amir bin Abdullah bin Sad bin Mufreh had started an uprising in the adjoining areas of Yamamah in 65 A.H. He wisely did not accept the command of his men rather he entrusted one of his group called Abu Talut with the task. That group had not acquired any significance by 65 A.H. except for making night attacks on caravans and making the roads dangerous for travelers. In 66 A.H., they became so powerful that they began to loot and annihilate cities. At this point, Najdeh assumed the leadership by removing Abu Talut and at the end of 66 A.H., he established himself as the permanent ruler of the place and its adjoining areas. Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) could not send an army towards Yamamah during that period because Syria and Iraq were more important to him at the time. Consequently, Najdeh's rule over Yamamah lasted until 69 or 70 A.H.

### **Preparation for the Invasion on Kufa**

Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) was recognized as caliph in 64 A.H. and in the same year Egypt, Palestine and Syria were excluded from the jurisdiction of his caliphate and the caliphate of Banu Umayyah

was re-established. In 65 A.H., there were uprisings in some provinces but Abdullah bin Zubair continued to be regarded as caliph and no other province was lost from under his control. In 66 A.H., both Kufa and Yamamah went out of his jurisdiction. Mukhtar and Najdeh bin Amir established their rule in Kufa and Yamamah respectively. Basra and Persia were controlled by Harith bin Rabia and Muhallab bin Abu Sofra respectively and the mischief of the Khawarij was crushed immediately as soon as it raised the specter of revolt. Basra was being lured and swayed by Mukhtar. Both Abdullah bin Moti, the ex-Governor of Kufa, and Amr bin Abdur Rahman, the nominated Governor of Kufa, were present in Basra. They avoided Abdullah bin Zubair and their presence in Basra might mean danger to him as their complicity in some sort of conspiracy could not be ruled out. When Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) heard that Obaidullah bin Zeyad was killed by Ibrahim bin Malik, he heaved a sigh of relief and was relieved of some pressure from the side of the Syrians plus it meant that Abdul Malik bin Marwan's power had received a set-back and therefore he could not venture to attack the Hijaz any time soon. However, the dangers around Basra multiplied many fold because Mukhtar bin Abu Obaida's attention was likely to be focused on Basra itself. Because of this he at once removed the Governor of Basra, Harith bin Rabia and in his place deputed his own brother Mus'ab bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) as its Governor.

During this time, many people fled from Kufa for fear of Mukhtar and his revenge and took shelter in Basra. They were those who had an apprehension they might be killed by Mukhtar in retaliation for Husain's death. Among the fugitives were Sheeth bin Rabi and Muhammad bin Al-Ash'ath. Mus'ab bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) took control of the government and leadership of Basra and began to study and take stock of the different situations minutely and in detail. The people from Kufa among whom were some respected and experienced persons, advised Mus'ab bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) to invade Kufa. Mus'ab said, "I have been ordered by Amir-ul-Muminin Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) not to invade Kufa without taking Muhallab bin Abu Sofra with me so he should first be called from Persia." So, Mus'ab wrote a letter to Muhallab and sent it through Muhammad bin Ash'ath. Seeing Ash'ath, Muhallab said, "Couldn't

Mus'ab lay his hands on anyone else besides you to be his messenger"? He said. "I am not a messenger. I have come for my own selfish end, to narrate to you the conditions prevalent in Kufa. Our slaves sons have dispossessed us of our assets and houses and the afflicted ones have sought refuge in Basra and cry for help and rescue from this catastrophe."

Muhallab handed over the administration of the Persian Province to his son, Mughira bin Muhallab, and made satisfactory arrangements for the territory. Then he collected a huge amount of money, material and troops and marched towards Basra and met Mus'ab bin Zubair (رضى الله عنه) there. Abdullah bin Zubair's letter had already reached Muhallab advising him to see Mus'ab bin Zubair (رضى الله عنه) in Basra and invade Kufa. When Muhallab hesitated and delayed a bit, Mus'ab had to send a messenger from Basra to Makkah. Abdullah bin Zubair (رضى الله عنه) might have delayed a bit more in launching an attack on Kufa but when Mukhtar began to massacre people on a large scale in Kufa and announced his claim that Jibrail (the angel of revelation) visits me with the Wahi (revelation) from Allāh and I have been made a prophet", the inhabitants began to flee from the city. Some went to Basra and some went direct to Abdullah bin Zubair (رضى الله عنه) and narrated to him the atrocities perpetrated by Mukhtar and his claim to prophethood. Hearing that Mukhtar announced his claim to prophethood, Abdullah bin Zubair (رضى الله عنه) did not think it proper to delay even a little in exterminating this abomination. He wrote to Muhallab to move quickly and answered Mus'ab insisting that he wait for the arrival of Muhallab in Basra and then together with him invaded Kufa.

### **The Death of Mukhtar and Capture of Kufa**

When Muhallab came, Mus'ab bin Zubair (رضى الله عنه) asked him to array his army in a particular manner. He sent Abdur Rahman bin Ahnaf to Kufa and instructed him to stay there and take the oath of allegiance from the people in the name of Abdullah bin Zubair (رضى الله عنه). He set Abbād bin Haseen Hatmi Tamimi in the vanguard, Umar bin Obaidullah bin Mamar on the right flank, Muhallab bin Abu Sofra on the left flank and himself in the middle. Arrayed in this manner the



army left Basra and marched towards Kufa. When Mukhtar received the news, he also came out of Kufa with his army. Ibrahim bin Malik was Governor of Mosil at the time and he failed to come to Kufa. There was a group in the army of Basra consisting of those who had fled from Kufa and sought refuge in Basra. That group was led by Muhammad bin Ash'ath. The confrontation of those two armies took place near a village named Madar. It was a fierce battle in which Mukhtar was defeated. He fled from Kufa, fortified the royal palace and stayed there besieged.

When the Kufan army was put to rout, Mohammad bin Ash'ath followed the runaways and continued slaying them as they escaped for a long distance. Mus'ab bin Zubair besieged the royal palace that lasted for several days. One thousand people were besieged inside the palace with Mukhtar. Finally, compelled by the shortage of food supplies, he made up his mind to open the gate of the fort and die fighting. His companions forbade him and advised him to ask Mus'ab for security of his life before opening the gate. They were sure that Mus'ab would give him security of his life but he disapproved of this advice. He poured scented oil on his head, rubbed perfume on his clothes, armed himself and came out of the palace. Only nineteen persons accompanied him. The rest remained behind in the palace. Mukhtar came out and attacked and was killed by the sons of Abdullah bin Dajaja Saifi.

Mukhtar was killed on 14 Ramadān 67 A.H. Among his companions who were killed included Obaidullah Ali bin Abu Tālib. Mus'ab arrested those who were besieged in the palace. Those arrested on the battlefield were also brought to Kufa. The captives were brought to a vast field and a counsel was held. Muhallab bin Abi Sofra was of the opinion that they should be let off but Mohammad bin Ash'ath and all the other Kufans forbade Mus'ab bin Zubair to act upon that advice.

Mus'ab bin Zubair was in a fix. The Kufans said. "They took the oath of allegiance, at Mukhtar's hands and he did not spare a single house in Kufa he put at least one or two persons to death in every house. If the captives were set free, the whole of Kufa will turn rebellious." The captives numbered six thousand. Seven hundred were Arabs and the rest were Persians. After deep thought Mus'ab bin Zubair finally



decided that they should be done away with and therefore, all were slain. The Kufans heaved a sigh of relief. Mus'ab had Mukhtar's both hands severed and hung on the gate of Kufa's central mosque, which continued hanging there until the time of Hajjaj's leadership.

Having captured Kufa, Mus'ab bin Zubair wrote a letter to Ibrahim bin Malik who was appointed Governor of Mosil by Mukhtar, "You must surrender to me. I shall give you authority over Syria. I also promise that all the countries you capture from Syria to the west will be granted to you." Now after Mukhtar's death, Abdul Malik bin Marwan from Damascus wrote a letter to Ibrahim, "You lay down your arms before me and I shall give you authority over Iraq and what ever territories you occupy towards the east will be included under your rule." Ibrahim had received identical letters from both the sides. He preferred Mus'ab to Abdul Malik. He visited Kufa, recognized Abdullah bin Zubair's caliphate and took the oath of allegiance, at Mus'ab's hands. Mus'ab deputed Muhallab bin Abi Sofra to Mosil and Jazirah (The region that lies between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers and is bounded on the south by a line running between Takrit and Anbar. It is the northern end of Mesopotamia, now making up part of northern Iraq and extending into eastern Turkey and extreme northeastern Syria) and kept Ibrahim with him as commander-in-chief. When Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) heard of Mukhtar's death and the capture of Kufa, he nominated Mus'ab and his own son Hamza bin Abdullah, as the Governor of Kufa and Basra. Hamza displeased the people of Basra and they wrote letters to Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) requesting him to dismiss him and send Mus'ab as Governor. Finally in 68 A.H., the Governorship of Basra was also entrusted to Mus'ab by Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه).

### **Amr bin Sayeed was killed**

It has already been mentioned that Obaidullah bin Zeyad, following his failure in confronting and besieging Zafar bin Harith, had left Qarqisa. When Ibn Zeyad was killed, Abdul Malik organized his army and wanted to invade Iraq. First of all he thought it proper to invade Zafar bin Harith Kalbi, the Governor of Qarqisa. Abdul Malik therefore appointed his sister's son Abdur Rahman bin Umm Hakam as his deputy in Damascus and he himself, taking Amr bin Sayeed bin

Aas and an army set out to Qarqisa. Mention has been made previously that Marwan bin Hakam was enthroned on the condition that Khalid bin Yazid and Amr bin Sayeed would be the rulers respectively after him. Instead of giving the reign of the country to them, he declared his own sons Abdul Malik and Abdul Aziz as his successors. Khalid and Amr both were deposed from the succession. Amr bin Sayeed commanded respect and popularity among Banu Umayyah. He had many slaves and material possessions. He also had ability as a commander. When Abdul Malik sat on the throne after Marwan, he treated Amr bin Sayeed so well that his resentment and rankling in his heart evaporated and when he marched with his army to Qarqisa, Amr bin Sayeed asked him on the way to nominate him as his successor, since similar promises were made to him earlier he simply wanted a formal announcement and confirmation. Abdul Malik refused to fulfil his wish and Amr bin Sayeed felt betrayed and distraught. Having an opportunity on the way he slipped away and returned to Damascus and immediately after his arrival drove out Abdur Rahman, the acting governor, occupied Damascus and declared his caliphate and reign. He gathered the people, gave a sermon and made promises to fix salaries for them and treat them kindly.

On receiving this news, Abdul Malik immediately returned to Damascus and laid a siege to it. The fight continued for a long period Abdul Malik could not pay attention to any other issue. At last, the people made them agree to a reconciliation. The agreement was drafted and Amr bin Sayeed coming out of the town, met Abdul Malik in his tent and handed over Damascus to him. Abdul Malik always had an apprehension of Amr bin Sayeed. Now he thought it important to stamp out that danger. He invited him to his court to begin the deception. Amr bin Sayeed came and sat on the throne beside him as usual. Some persons had already been put in place to carry out the deed of treachery and so he was caught and killed.

When Amr bin Sayeed's brother Yahya received the information, he rushed with one thousand people to attack the headquarters of the Amir and besieged it. Abdul Malik cut off Amr bin Sayeed's head and tossed it down to them and rained down money from above. They people began to pick up money and Yahya was left standing all alone.

At last, he was caught and imprisoned. Amr bin Sayeed's sons were also sent to jail with Yahya. They remained there until Mus'ab bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) was killed and Abdul Malik occupied Iraq. Amr bin Sayeed was killed in 69 A.H.

### **Mus'ab bin Zubair's Imprudence**

It has been mentioned above that Basra was ruled over by Hamza bin Abdullah bin Zubair for less than a year and after that its administration was also entrusted to Mus'ab bin Zubair. Mus'ab bin Zubair personally went to Basra and appointed Amr bin Obaidullah his deputy there, and instructed him to go to Persia to discipline the Khawārij if needed, and to depute someone else in Basra. After shifting and replacing the governors and lieutenants of these provinces and staying for a few days there, he left Basra and returned to Kufa. In 70 A.H., the mischief of the Khawārij gained momentum. Mughira bin Muhallab and Amr bin Obaidullah failed to stamp it out. Mus'ab bin Zubair transferred Muhallab bin Abi Sofra from the Governorship of Mosil to that of Persia and ordered him to suppress the Khawārij there. It is understood that none other than Muhallab bin Abi Sofra could have tackled the problem of the Khawārij. He said, "I am glad to go to Persia but to shift me from here will be extremely harmful for you because Abdul Malik bin Marwan has begun to spread his net of secret conspiracies in Iraq. I have been studying his manipulation very minutely. I am afraid if I depart from here, he might succeed in his maneuverings."

Mus'ab bin Zubair considered the urgency of Persia more of a priority to a problem that was not yet manifested. Muhallab was therefore ordered to leave for Persia. Mus'ab had two very efficient and experienced generals Ibrahim and Muhallab. He had one of them part from him. He sent Abdullah bin Hzim as Governor of Khurāsān. Abbad bin Haseen was put with Muhallab both of whom were seasoned veterans and experienced generals. Thus, Mus'ab bin Zubair separated his able men from him and sent them to distant places. Only Ibrahim bin Malik in Kufa and Amr bin Obaidullah bin Mamar in Basra were left.

Abdul Malik bin Marwan, being freed from the internal danger to his

caliphate by killing Amr bin Sayeed had begun to hatch conspiracies against the rule of Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه). He sent his men to Persia and tempted and lured the Khawārij and incited them to revolt. Then he sent his agents to Kufa and Basra also, and succeeded in spreading his net of conspiracies through the supporters of Banu Umayyah. He began to tempt the military officers of Mus'ab bin Zubair by sending letters to them. He went to the extent of trying to lure and bring Muhallab and Ibrahim to his side but they were not the type to betray Mus'ab bin Zubair. That is why Muhallab was very pensive and concerned when he left Syria for Persia.

### **Abdul Malik's War Preparations**

Abdul Malik sent Khalid bin Obaidullah bin Khalid bin Usaid to Basra on a secret mission to convert the people to support Banu Umayyah and oppose Abdullah bin Zubair. Khalid, therefore, visited Basra and initiated the conspiratorial process and won a number of people to his side. When Amr bin Obaidullah bin Mamar came to know of it, he sent an army to Basra. Khalid's men fought but Khalid was driven out of Basra. When the disturbing news reached Kufa, and the state of affairs was fully conveyed to Mus'ab bin Zubair, it was impossible for him to remain passive once he understood the conspiracy.

The disturbing news brought Mus'ab bin Zubair from Kufa to Basra. He punished and fined Khalid's companions and had the houses of some pulled down. Similarly in Kufa too, Abdul Malik's men had been working secretly. The greatest trouble was from some military leaders like Attāb bin Warqā who had entered into a plot with Abdul Malik.

On the one hand, Abdul Malik began to make preparations for a major battle, and spread conspiracies of rebellion among the armies of Kufa and Basra on the other. One day, Ibrahim bin Ushtur received a sealed letter from Abdul Malik bin Marwan. He immediately knew what it contained. He gave it to Mus'ab, unopened with the seal still intact. When Mus'ab read it, it disclosed that Abdul Malik had written to Ibrahim, "Come to my side. I shall make you the Governor of Iraq."

## **The Death of Mus'ab bin Zubair**

At last, after completing his preparations, Abdul Malik left Syria and marched towards Iraq. He left Damascus after he had received many letters from the noblemen of Kufa inviting him to invade it at once. His counselors forbade him saying the letters from Kufa might be similar to those received by Husain (رضى الله عنه). Abdul Malik said, "Imam Husain (رضى الله عنه) was fully dependent on Kufa. I am going with a strong army. Their breach of trust and betrayal can not harm me. I am sure, once they see me with a strong army, they will not go back on the promise they made in their letters."

At last, Abdul Malik marched with his army. Mus'ab bin Zubair also started from the other side. At the time when Abdul Malik's news of attack reached Kufa, Mus'ab bin Zubair had already sent Amr bin Obaidullah bin Mamar to Persia to help suppress the Khawārij. So even Amr bin Obaidullah was away from the battle. Both the armies pitched their tents at Dair jathaleeq. Mus'ab bin Zubair's army was small because at the last-minute many of his men refused to go and presented lame excuses. A large number of those who ventured to come on to the battlefield were in collusion with the enemy and were waiting to join the enemy the moment the battle started. The fight began and Abdul Malik first attacked the part of the army commanded by Ibrahim bin Malik because he feared him. The attack was launched by Abdul Malik's brother Mohammad bin Marwan. Both sides displayed exemplary valor. Ultimately Ibrahim pushed Mohammad bin Marwan back. Seeing him retreat, Abdul Malik sent Obaidullah bin Yazid with a fresh group of soldiers to help Mohammad because they were in a pitched battle. It was in this fight that Muslim bin Umar Bahli (Qutaiba bin Muslim's father) was killed.

When Mus'ab bin Zubair saw Ibrahim getting mobbed, he sent Attab bin Warqa to his rescue. Attab bin Warqa had already taken the oath of allegiance secretly for Abdul Malik. He fled from the field accordingly. Ibrahim, though surrounded by enemies, killed fighting bravely. His death boosted the morale of Abdul Malik and the Syrians and they were now very sure of their victory.

Mus'ab bin Zubair asked his other generals and associates to move ahead and launch an attack but no one moved from his place. They all turned as if deaf. Only a few were fighting and the remaining Kufan soldiers were only spectators.

The Kufan's betrayal this time even exceed the betrayal which they had perpetrated on Imam Husain (رضى الله عنه) because they were forced by Ibn Zeyâd and his army not to support Imam Husain (رضى الله عنه) and they were terror stricken to the extreme.

It was nothing but greed and their sheer disobedience, betrayal and ingratitude that stopped them from siding with Mus'ab bin Zubair. Abdul Malik did not want Mus'ab to be killed so he sent his brother Muhammad bin Marwan to him with the word, "The fight has taken a turn for the worse for you. You can never win. I give you security and pardon. Please accept it." Mus'ab refused, saying, "Allah's security is sufficient for me." Then Mohammad bin Marwan said to Mus'ab's son Isa, "Amir al-Muminin Abdul Malik has granted security to you and to your father." Hearing that he came to his father. Mus'ab said, "Yes, I do believe that the Syrians will keep their promise with you. You may go with their security if you like." Isa said, "I shall not give the chance to the women of Quraish to say that Isa has betrayed his father for the sake of his own life." Mus'ab said, "Well, then go to your uncle Abdullah bin Zubair (رضى الله عنه) in Makkah and narrate to him about the Iraqi's betrayal. Leave me here. I have considered myself already killed." Isa said, "I won't go to break that kind of news. You can leave the battlefield and go to Basra. The people there are very pleased with you. They are loyal to you in all respects. Some alternative might be thought out in Basra or let us go to Makkah then."

Mus'ab said, "My son, this is not possible because my flight from the field would become a topic of heated discussion among the Quraish. Better give up this idea and attack the enemy." Isa then took his troops and attacked the enemy and after killing many of the enemy soldiers, he dropped dead before his father's eyes.

Abdul Malik came forward and entreated Mus'ab, "Please go back from the field or accept the offer of security. In his appeal, he was humble but Mus'ab ignored it. That must have been a strange time, Abdul Malik was pleading with his enemy for his safety while

simultaneously seeing the consequences of his secret plots. The Kufan army was in the field but it was not obeying its 'Amir' and silently watching from a distance. Mus'ab bin Zubair was puzzled seeing the army that had followed his orders and sacrificed their lives, treacherously abandoning him. By killing Mus'ab bin Zubair and Imam Husain (رضی اللہ عنہ) the Kufans committed a crime of the same magnitude although these two crimes were accomplished in two different ways. Imam Husain (رضی اللہ عنہ) wanted his enemies to let him leave the battlefield and go to either Makkah or Damascus or any other place and Mus'ab bin Zubair's enemies themselves wished him to leave the battlefield and go to the place of his choice. Imam Husain's enemies did not listen to him and here Mus'ab bin Zubair rejected his enemies appeal to escape. The consequences in both the cases were the same.

Mus'ab bin Zubair went to his tent after his son's death, put oil on his hair, perfumed himself, came out and attacked his enemies. Only seven persons were left with him and they were all killed together with him. He attacked so fiercely that he disturbed the Syrian's lines. At last, he dropped unconscious after receiving innumerable wounds of arrows, swords and spears. As soon as he collapsed, the Syrians cut off his head and so in 71 A.H. a decade after, the drama of Karbala it was repeated at Dair Jathaleeq.

Abdul Malik took the oath of allegiance from all the Kufan army for his caliphate on that same battlefield. He left it and reached Nakhlah near Kufa and halted there for forty days. When he felt satisfied that the Kufan's would remain loyal, he entered the city. He delivered a sermon at the central mosque in which he promised to treat them kindly. Then he pleased them with gifts and by treating them honorably. He wrote to the Governors of Persia, Khorasan, Basra and Ahwaz to take the oath from their people for him.

He retained Muhallab bin Abi Sofra in his original position. They all recognized Abdul Malik's caliphate since there was no other alternative. Only Abdullah bin Hazim who governed a part of Khorasan, refused to take the oath and was killed by Bahr bin Warqa after a few days.

Abdul Malik made Khalid bin Osaid and his own brother Bashir bin

Marwan the Governors of Basra and Kufa respectively. He sent Mus'ab bin Zubair's head to Damascus. When it reached there, the people wanted to make a display of it but Abdul Malik's wife named Atika bint Yazid bin Muawiya forbade them to do so. She had it washed and then buried. Muhallab bin Abi Sofra also surrendered to Abdul Malik and took the people's oaths on his behalf.

### **Zofar bin Harith and Abdul Malik**

The siege of Qarqisa has already been narrated. Obaidullah bin Zeyad and the other chiefs failed to subdue Zofar bin Harith and in every attack the Syrians suffered defeat. Now when Abdul Malik bin Marwan turned to Iraq with his army, he gave an army to Aban bin Oqba bin Abu Mu'ait, the governor of Hims, and sent him ahead before his own departure. The purpose was to defeat Zofar bin Harith. Aban arrived and began the fight. Abdul Malik arrived there with a huge army before the battle had rendered any result. He laid siege to Qarqisa. Zofar bin Harith ordered his son Hudhail to attack the Syrians and not to return before the fall of Abdul Malik's tent. Hudhail obeyed his father and launched such a fierce attack that he succeeded in felling Abdul Malik's tent and returned safely. When Abdul Malik realized that it was not going to be easy to win Qarqisa and subdue Zofar bin Harith, he sent a message to him, "I give safety and pardon to you and your son. Take whatever post you like."

Zofar bin Harith replied, "I agree to compromise with you provided you don't press me to take the oath for a year and you do not demand any help from me against Abdullah bin Zubair." The agreement was about to be written when Abdul Malik received news that four towers of the city's gate had been razed to the ground therefore he refused to compromise and ordered the attack to continue. However, it proved fruitless and Zofar bin Harith forced Abdul Malik's army to retreat. Abdul Malik sent the message again, saying that he was ready to agree to all his conditions. Zofar bin Harith said, "I won't take the oath for anyone as long as Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) is living. Further, I want your promise that my troops will not be subjected to any interrogation or revenge."

Abdul Malik accepted all his conditions wrote the agreement and sent



it to him. Despite this Zofar bin Harith did not go to Abdul Malik because the case of Amr bin Sayeed was known to all. Ultimately, Abdul Malik sent the Prophet's staff he had with him to Zofar bin Harith. Zofar bin Harith kept this staff as a guarantor and went to Abdul Malik. Abdul Malik made him sit by his side on the throne and honored him and had his son Muslim bin Abdul Malik married to Zofar bin Harith's daughter. Freeing himself from the problems of Qarqisa he moved towards Mus'ab bin Zubair, the outcome of that advance has been narrated above.

### **The News of Mus'ab bin Zubair's Death in Makkah**

When the news reached Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) in Makkah that his brother, Mus'ab bin Zubair, was betrayed and treacherously killed and all of the territories of Iraq went under the domination of Abdul Malik bin Marwan, he gathered all the Makkans and addressed them as follows:

You should know that Allāh does not dishonor him who is on the right path though alone, and does not honor him whose supporter is the Satan though he has many supporters. And you should know that news has come from Iraq that makes me sad and happy, news of Mus'ab bin Zubair's death has come. I am happy because his death amounts to his martyrdom. I am sad because parting with a loyal friend at a time of crisis gives a burning pain, which every friend would feel. A man of good sense accepts it patiently and unwaveringly. Who was Mus'ab? He was one of the slaves of Allāh and one of my supporters. Let it be known to you that the Iraqis are very disloyal and great hypocrites. They bartered the profit gained from Mus'ab for a petty price. If Mus'ab was slain, his father, brother and son who were all very gentle and pious were also slain. By Allāh, we shall not die in bed as the descendents of Abul-Aas are dying (This is in reference to Abdul Malik's father Marwan bin Hakam. Abul Aas was the grandfather of Marwan). By Allāh, none of them was killed on the battlefield either in the days of ignorance or after the coming of Islam. We are used to dying from the wounds of spears and swords. Brothers, beware, the world has been taken as a loan from the Magnificent Emperor whose kingdom is eternal and whose territory

doesn't perish. If the world comes to us, we shall not take it as the low, the deviated and the disgraced do and if it turns its back on us and escapes, we shall not weep over it as the weak, the destitute and the senseless do. This is what I wanted to tell you and I beg forgiveness of Allāh for you all.

### **Abdul Malik and Abdullah bin Zubair (رضى الله عنه)**

After bringing Iraq under his domination, Abdul Malik sent Urwah bin Anif with six thousand men to Madinah with the instructions to halt outside of the city and not to enter it unless he received another order from him. Harith bin Hâtib bin Ma'mar was the Governor of Madinah who was appointed by Abdullah bin Zubair. Hearing of Urwa's approach, Harith left the city. Urwa encamped outside the city for a month without touching or disturbing anything, then he went back to Abdul Malik in Damascus and Harith returned to Madinah.

Abdullah bin Zubair (رضى الله عنه) had sent Sulaiman bin Khalid as the Governor of Khaibar and Fadak. Abdul Malik bin Marwan gave Abdul Malik bin Harith bin Hakam four thousand soldiers and ordered him to conquer the Hijaz. He encamped in Wadi Al-Qura and from there he sent Ibn Qamqam with a division of the army to Khaibar with the instructions to launch a night attack on Sulaiman. Sulaiman was caught and killed and Ibn Qamqam stayed at Khaibar.

Hearing the news of the invasion of the Hijaz, Abdullah bin Zubair (رضى الله عنه) dismissed Harith bin Hâtib from the governorship of Madinah and appointed Jâbir bin Aswad bin 'Auf Zuhri in his place. Jabir reached Madinah and sent Abu Bakr bin Abu Qais with a regiment of six hundred soldiers to Khaibar. In the battle that ensued, Ibn Qamqam suffered a defeat and fled. Some of his troops were killed on the battlefield and some escaped.

When Abdul Malik bin Marwan received the news, he sent Tariq bin Amr as the commander of the Hijaz expedition. He further instructed him to halt between Wadi Al-Qara and 'Eilâ' and try his best to stop the Governors of Ibn Zubair (رضى الله عنه) from advancing and capturing any more territory, and stamp out the movement against him there before it succeeded. Târiq did accordingly. He sent a strong army

towards Khaibar. In the skirmish that followed, Abu Bakr bin Abu Qais along with two hundred soldiers was killed. Tariq stayed at Khaibar. Jabir bin Aswad received the news and sent two thousand soldiers from Madinah to face Tariq. The clash took place near Khaibar. Tariq was victorious and killed all the captives and the wounded.

Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) dismissed Jabir bin Aswad from the governorship of Madinah and appointed in his place Talha bin Abdullah bin Auf known as Talhat-un-Nida. After that, the state of Khaibar was annexed to Abdul Malik bin Marwan's caliphate and Talha bin Abdullah continued to govern Madinah on behalf of Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه). No clash worth mentioning took place between them because Abdul Malik's attention was centered on Iraq and Iran.

### **Siege of Makkah**

Abdul Malik wanted to persuade the Syrian chiefs to attack Makkah but all of them refused to face Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) and turn the Ka'bah into a battlefield. He then left Damascus and went to Kufa. There he induced Hajjaj bin Yusuf Thaqafi to do it. Hajjaj took three thousand soldiers and left Kufa in Jumad Al-Awwal 72 A.H. and went to Madinah from there he went to Taif and set up camp according to Abdul Malik's instructions. From Taif, he used to send his cavalry to Arafat and they would come back after engaging in small skirmishes. Several months passed by in this way. Then Hajjaj wrote to Abdul Malik to send him some more soldiers as reinforcements and permit him to go ahead and lay siege to Makkah.

Abdul Malik conceded to Hajjaj's request and sent five thousand men to him and wrote to Tariq to attack Madinah and after taking over Madinah, move to Makkah and help Hajjaj. Hajjaj besieged Makkah in the month of Ramadan fixed a catapult on the mount of Abu Qubais and started launching stones. For the Makkans fasting in the month of Ramadan and being attacked by stones was indeed a very difficult month. Getting tired of the siege, the people began to leave from the city. Dhul-Qa'dah followed Ramadan and Shawwal and the Makkans did not get any respite from the severity and pressure of the siege.

Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) went to face the enemy daily and tried to get the better of the attackers but the number of his troops kept dwindling and so his plan did not yield any movement towards victory.

Many Makkans were going out of the city and the shortage and cost of foodstuff had shaken the hopes of those remaining. In Dhul-Qa'dah 72 A.H. Tariq expelled Talhatun Nida, Abdullah bin Zubair's Governor, from Madinah and made a Syrian the Administrator of Madinah, he himself left for Makkah along with five thousand soldiers. That added to Hajjaj's strength considerably and the little hope the Makkans had, vanished. It was in that state that the month of Dhul Hijjah began and pilgrims from a far started pouring into the city.

Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) had allowed Hajjaj to perform his Hajj but he did not do Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka'bah) nor did he do Sai (running and walking) between the mounts of Safa and Marwah. When Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) wanted to go to the plain of Arafat, Hajjaj prevented him. For this reason, he made the sacrifice in Makkah itself. There was no Imam on the plain of Arafat to lead the prayers and the pilgrims could not perform all the rites of Hajj. Hajjaj did not stop the siege or the rain of stones even during the Hajj and so going around the Ka'bah was fraught with danger. With the arrival of the pilgrims in Makkah, the severity of the famine also increased. Abdullah bin Omar (رضي الله عنه) also came to perform Hajj that year. Realizing the gravity of the situation, he sent a message to Hajjaj, "O slave of Allah! Think about the people from far off lands that have come for Hajj. They should have the opportunity to make Tawaf (circumambulation of the Ka'bah) and Sai (running and walking) between the mounts of Safa and Marwa. Stop the rain of stones until the end of Hajj." The message had its effect. Hajjaj stopped the catapult but did not make Tawaf himself nor did he allow Abdullah bin Zubair to go to the plain of Arafat. With the conclusion of the Hajj, the announcement was made on behalf of Hajjaj that those coming from abroad should leave for their homes at once because Ibn Zubair (رضي الله عنه) was soon going to be showered with stones. As soon as they heard the ominous proclamation, they set out for their respective destinations. Along with them most of those who had remained in Makkah escaped.

Hajjaj resumed his attack with the catapult. A large boulder fell on the roof of the Ka'bah and it collapsed. With the fall of that stone, a peal of thunder came from the heavens. Lightning flashed and then darkness engulfed the earth and the sky. Hajjaj's soldiers became terrified and gave up using the catapult. Hajjaj consoled and encouraged them and said, "This lightning and this peal of thunder have come to help me. They symbolize my victory. Don't give way to fear at all."

The darkness continued for a couple of days and a loud crackling bolt of lightening killed a few of Hajjaj's soldiers. The soldiers were extremely concerned. The lightening was flashing again the next day and a thunderbolt this time hit two soldiers of Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) who died on impact. This gladdened Hajjaj's heart and his soldiers also heaved a sigh of relief. Hajjaj himself loaded stones and began shooting them. After that, the fear that was gripping the whole army vanished and the launching of stones resumed more vigorously. Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) used to offer his prayer at the Ka'bah and big stones would fall around him but it did not disturb his concentration on Allāh and his devotion during his prayer in the least.

The siege continued with the same intensity and force. No supplies from outside Makkah could come in. Things came to such a pass that Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) slaughtered his horse and distributed it among the people. He had a stock of grain and dates. He distributed as much as was necessary for them to survive. The purpose was to stand the siege as long as possible. When Hajjaj saw that his plan was not going to succeed, he began to write to Abdullah bin Zubair's men and promise them security and amnesty to those who would join him. This worked and many of them parted with Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) and went over to Hajjaj's side finally, only a few persons were left with him. His two sons, Hamza and Habib, also left their father and went over to Hajjaj. The third son remained with his father and displayed valor on the battlefield until the last breath of his life. When thousands of men left Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) and joined the opposing side, Hajjaj gathered them together and addressed them as follows:

You can estimate the remaining power of Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه). His men are in such short number that if each of you threw a

handful of pebbles on them, they would all die. Besides that, all of them are hungry and thirsty. O my dear Syrians and Kufans! Advance now. Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) will live only for a few seconds.

Now prior to this speech, Hajjaj had sent a letter to Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) which read:

"Now you have been rendered powerless. You have become helpless in all respects. Come under my security and take the oath for Amir al-Muminin, Abdul Malik. You will be treated with all honor and every wish of yours will be fulfilled. I have been ordered by Amir al-Muminin to try my best to invite you to reconciliation and not to be hasty in killing you.

### **Martyrdom of Ibn Zubair (رضي الله عنه)**

After going through the letter Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) went to his mother, Asma bint Abu Bakr Siddiq (رضي الله عنها), and said to her: I have been left with no one (to support me). Only five persons worth the name of friend are with me who have supported me until now. The people have betrayed me just as they betrayed Husain bin Ali (رضي الله عنه). Their sons fought with their swords in front of their fathers only as long as they lived. My sons also went over to the wicked. Now Hajjaj tells me: "you too come under my security and I shall give you all you demand". I have therefore come to you to seek your advice.

Asma (رضي الله عنها) replied: You understand your problem better than I do. If you are on the right path and invite people to it, keep doing it. Your friends died on this right path. You should also remain steadfast on it and meet your martyrdom. If you had intended to seek worldly prosperity, you are a great misfit. You have not only landed yourself in trouble but also those who are with you. As for my opinion, don't hand yourself over to Banu Umayyah. Death will come on time. You should live and die like a man. Your statement that you are justified and that people have made you weak by their betrayal, is a kind of complaint that does not come on the tongue of the pious."

Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) said: "I am afraid that after killing me they have my body trampled by horsemen and hang it on the scaffold.

Asma (رضي الله عنها) said: My son! When the goat is slaughtered, it does

not care whether it is skinned. Whatever you are doing, keep doing it with insight and keep asking for Allāh's help."

Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) kissed his mother's head and said: "I am also of the same view. I never wished for the world or desired a worldly kingdom. I took this work because the commandments of Allāh were not being obeyed and the people did not shun the forbidden things. As long as I breathe, I shall continue to fight for the right. I thought it necessary to take counsel from you and it has strengthened my will. Mother! I am sure I shall be killed today. Don't be sad. Surrender me to Allāh. I never intended to do anything unlawful. I never committed a breach of trust nor did I perpetrate an atrocity on anyone nor did I support any oppressor. I never did anything against the Divine wish. O Allāh! I haven't said all these things out of pride but for the consolation and satisfaction of my mother."

Asma said, "I hope Allāh will reward you for it. Go and attack the enemy with Allāh's Name."

When Asma (رضي الله عنها) embraced her son at the time of bidding him good-bye, her hands happened to touch his armor. She asked, "Why have you put on this armor?" He said, "For satisfaction and strength."

Asma (رضي الله عنها) said: "Take it off and fight against the enemy in your ordinary clothes."

Ibn Zubair (رضي الله عنه) took the armor off and threw it away. He lifted up the end of his shirt and tied it to his waist. He rolled up his sleeves and came out of his house and said to his friends:

"O children of Zubair (رضي الله عنه)! Don't be afraid of the clanging of the swords because applying ointment to a wound hurts it more than what is felt when the wound is received. Hold your swords. Save it, from unlawful killing as you save your face. Lower down your eyes so that they may not get dazzled. Attack your counterpart. Don't look for me. If you do look for me, you will find me fighting with the enemies in the forefront."

Saying that he launched a very ferocious attack on the Syrians. Chopping through their battle array, he reached the rear line of the Syrians and came fighting back to his place. Hajjaj incited his soldiers



to the utmost but none dared to face Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه). At last, Hajjaj took the infantry and surrounded Abdullah bin Zubair's flag holder. Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) at once led an attack and brought his flag holder out of the siege and pushed the enemies back. He returned and offered two 'rakats' of 'salat' near Maqam Ibrahim (Station of Ibrahim). Hajjaj attacked again and the flag holder was killed at Bab Banu Shaiba. The Syrians had stood guard at all the doors of the Haram Sharif (the honored sanctuary). Hajjaj and Tariq had laid siege up to Marwa from the side of Al Batah (this final battle took place in the holy confines of the sanctuary of the Ka'bah).

Now Ibn Zubair (رضي الله عنه) was attacking from one side to the other. Having offered his prayer, he resumed fighting. He attacked in the direction of Bab Safa and pushed the Syrians to the distant rear. Somebody shot an arrow from the top of Mount Safa. It hit his forehead and he started bleeding. He continued to fight in that condition. In short, he and his companions, from the morning until after the post noon prayer, displayed such exemplary agility and bravery in putting the Syrians to death that the world has never witnessed. At last, all his companions laid down their lives one by one. The enemies rained down stones and arrows on him from all sides threw spears and swords had already left him wounded. At long last, on Tuesday in Jamad al-Awwal 73 A.H. this grand hero and pious man of the world met his martyrdom. With the exception of valor and dauntlessness, piety and prayer, courage and nobility, there was none there to mourn over his dead body. The Syrian army cut off his head. When it was taken to Hajjaj, he prostrated out of thankfulness to Allah. The army raised the cry Allahu Akbar. The dead body was hung on a scaffold at the same place Hajun and the head was sent to Abdul Malik. Another tradition says that it was not sent to him but it was hung on the wall or the rain channel of the Ka'bah.

Asma bint Abi Bakr (رضي الله عنها) sought permission to bury the dead body but Hajjaj refused. When Abdul Malik came to know of it, he condemned and cursed Hajjaj and allowed it to be buried. Asma also died after a few days.

After Ibn Zubair's martyrdom, Hajjaj entered the Ka'bah. The entire floor was littered with stones thrown from the catapult. It was stained



with patches of blood. He had the stones removed and the blood washed. He took from the Makkans the oath for Abdul Malik's caliphate and then returned to Madinah. He lived there for two months and considering the entire population of Madinah as the killers of Uthmān bin Affan (رضي الله عنه) he perpetrated atrocities on them. He tortured some of the Prophet's (ﷺ) Companions. Then he left for Makkah and after pulling down the construction done by Abdullah bin Zubair on the Ka'bah, he reconstructed it. Abdul Malik made him the Governor of the Hijaz and Hajjaj bin Yusuf began to live in Madinah in place of Tariq.

### **A Glance at Abdullah Ibn Zubair's (رضي الله عنه) Caliphate**

Following Muawiya's death, his son Yazid did not deserve to be made the caliph of the Muslims at that time there were many people who were more capable of governing and doing the work of the caliphate. Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) was one of them. Yazid's personal life was objectionable and that was why some dignitaries of Islam refused to perform oath for his caliphate.

Had Imam Hasan (رضي الله عنه) been living after Amir Muawiya (رضي الله عنه) the Muslims could have probably accepted him as their caliph or emperor. Had Abdullah bin Umar (رضي الله عنهما) stood for the caliphate against Yazid, then not only all the sects in Islam would have supported him but also a good number of the people from amongst Banu Umayyah would have been seen in action in his support but he never cared to do it. Husain (رضي الله عنه) tried his best to secure the caliphate but the Kufans betrayed him. He did not accept the advice of the people of Makkah and Madinah, and the people of the Hijaz failed to help him. After him, there was none better than Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) who deserved the caliphate. The greatest proof of his justified and legal caliphate is the fact that all the people of the Islamic territories recognized him as their caliph on the basis of their free will, wherever the people were at liberty, none of them opposed him. Yes, Banu Umayyah were his rivals in the matter of caliphate and so they opposed him yet they would have opposed anyone who stood in their way. They re-established their rule in Syria, Palestine and Egypt, with a heavy hand and with the same tyrannical and coercive methods,

they managed to restore their rule over the entire Islamic world. Compared to Abdullah bin Zubair's caliphate, Marwan bin Hakam's and Abdul Malik bin Marwan's caliphates are known as the Caliphates of the Rebels. Abdul Malik's period of rule, following Abdullah bin Zubair's martyrdom should be taken as a full-fledged government and a legal caliphate.

During his regime, Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) did not have a time when he was free from territorial battles and disputes. So, if we do not find any new conquests and internal amendments and reformation during his rule, it is not surprising. He was a great general and horseman he was a great thinker and governor. It was only fate and destiny that allowed his rivals maneuverings to prove effective and that let him die as a martyr. His personal life was extremely praiseworthy from the viewpoint of prayer and piety.

Among the caliphates of Banu Umayyah, it was chiefly found that they knew how to use money and power in establishing and strengthening their caliphate and government. They were very active in getting money, and utilized it to serve their purpose very skillfully. Had there not been created in the people the lust for money, they would never have succeeded and Ali (رضي الله عنه) and Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) would have never met with failure against them. Had Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) like Abdul Malik bin Marwan reserved the treasury for his friends and supporters and disregarded the weak, he would have remained surrounded by many swordsmen and Banu Umayyah would have had to remain humble. But Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) disliked that impious policy and that is really to his credit and befitting of him.

During his regime, the killing of Mukhtar bin Abu Dbaid in Kufa was a remarkable achievement. He suppressed the mischief of the Khawārij very effectively and to the best of his ability, he did not allow them to revolt. If he had not been involved in battles and trials of strength against Banu Umayyah, he would have proved to be a good caliph and considerably promoted the Islamic Shari'ah in the world. His martyrdom marks the end of Sahāba' rule and governance (the rule by the Prophet's Companions). He was the last of the Prophet's Companions who ruled over an Islamic land and whose

dedicated and pious life was a beacon and a guiding star. He was the only caliph who made Makkah his capital city. It was not made the capital by anyone either before him or after him until now.

When we read about the brave feats of Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه), his brother Mus'ab bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه), his father Zubair bin Al Awam (رضي الله عنه) and also the valor and courage of his mother Asma bint Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنها), our hearts are filled with awe and the people of the world who know and understand valor are drawn by a natural love to them. Wallowing in dust and blood, receiving wounds from swords and arrows in the chest for supporting the cause of right and always advancing and putting the enemies of the right to death are some of life's most difficult tests, yet when done for the right cause they are satisfying and rewarding as well. The strength of heart, firmness of intention and height of valor and courage find their most befitting expression in the dazzling lights of swords, the sharp points of spears and the heavy rain of arrows. Our age is such an inauspicious and unfortunate age that the stories of the bravery of the Muslims, laying down their lives as recorded in the pages of history increase the circulation of blood in our veins for a while but we can not see with our eyes the battlefields where heads drop when chopped off by the sword, spears piercing chests, blood gushing forth from the necks, corpses jumping up in the mud of blood, horses running over and mutilating them, severed heads getting kicked by horses hooves and rolling here and there like some macabre fruit at harvest time, the sun hidden behind clouds of dust made by battling horses and men, chants of 'Allahu-Akbar' being raised, men of Allāh excelling one another in exalting the Name of their beloved Creator by laying down their lives and the Divine grace encompassing this exhilarating sight. Such magnificent and awe inspiring scenes were the portion of Talha (رضي الله عنه) and Zubair (رضي الله عنه), Khalid (رضي الله عنه) and Darrār (رضي الله عنه), Shurahbil (رضي الله عنه) and Abdur Rahman (رضي الله عنه), Husain bin Ali (رضي الله عنه) and Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه), Tariq bin Zeyad, Mohammad bin Qasim, Muhammad II, Sulaiman the Magnificent, Salahuddin Ayyubi and Nuruddin Zangi, Mahmud Ghaznawi and Shahabuddin Ghauri. It is not the portion of the people of weak 'Imān' (faith) and timorous hearts as we are. That is why Allāh has rendered swords, spears and arrows useless and sent cannons, rifles and

airplanes into the world instead. Also, strength of heart, firmness of determination, height of ambition and courage, as a symbol and as an expression of perfect 'Imān' (faith) can be better displayed by the edge of a sword than by gunpowder and ammunition.

## Kufa

From the Analysis of the conditions of the Kufans so far stated, strange ideas about Kufa and the Kufans grip our hearts and Kufa appears to be one of the most perplexing places on the surface of the entire earth. Abdullah bin Saba and all the conspiring groups scored successes there. It was the Kufans who were in the fore-front in murdering Uthman bin Affan (رضي الله عنه); they were again the greatest admirers and lovers of Ali (رضي الله عنه) and it was they who harassed him more than others and were responsible for many of his failures; it was again they who courted Husain (رضي الله عنه) and were ready to demand the revenge for Ali's death and his caliphate and, at last, it was they who caused Husain's martyrdom and had him murdered mercilessly at Karbala; it was they who first of all were instrumental in demanding the compensation for Husain's blood to prove their love for him in a splendid manner; it was again they who opposed the greatest supporter of the Prophet's descendants Mukhtar bin Abu Obaid and by inviting Mus'ab bin Zubair to attack Kufa had Mukhtar killed; it was they who caused the death of Mus'ab bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه); they showed matchless bravery as well as base cowardice; sometimes they got themselves killed fearlessly and opposed the Kufan rulers openly and sometimes they were so terrified that they executed every oppressive measure of the Kufan rulers like Obaidullah bin Zeyad without any question.

To understand such contradictory and contrasting traits and situations, we should make an attempt to acquaint ourselves with the conditions and the reality of the inhabitants of Kufa. During the regime of Umar bin Khattab (رضي الله عنه), Kufa was made as a cantonment for those who were at war with the fire-worshippers (Magian/Zoroastrian) of Iran. One part of it consisted of those who came from the Hijaz, Yemen and Hadaramout. They had assembled in Madinah at Umar bin Khattab's instance and were sent to Iraq. Some

of them were those who were the inhabitants of the provinces of Arabia, which bordered on Iraq and were comparatively near Kufa and Basra. They embraced Islam at the hands of the Prophet's companions and then joined the Islamic army and could not establish a particular link with Madinah nor had they ever seen it. Some were those whose mother tongue was Arabic but they were the subjects of the kingdom of fire-worshippers and then converted to Islam, they found the Islamic way congenial to them and became its supporters from the core of their hearts and fought against the Iranians on behalf of the Muslims. Some were dignitaries of the 'Muhajirs' (Emigrants) and 'Ansars' (Helpers) of Madinah. When Kufa was made a cantonment for the army and the deputy of the caliph and the commander-in-chief of the Iraqi army began to live in Kufa, the city-dwellers of many cities of Iran were forced by necessity to establish a rapport with the capital of Kufa and because of this groups of Iranians began to live there. Compared to the ascetic lives of the Arabian deserts, the royal and victorious lives of the victors of the countries of Kisra, Nausherewan, Kekaüs and Kekhusru in Kufa must have been very pleasant indeed: the excess of spoils of war must have contributed its part in enticing them. The greater part of the army acquired land and settled there. Through this evolution, Kufa not only remained a temporary cantonment and retreat but also turned into a big city very quickly and finally, it assumed the status of Iraq's capital. As the population consisted mainly of soldiers and lacked the facilities of learning and teaching, disciplining of morals and self, the temperament and morality of the city, on the whole, was prone to constant change. It is easy to understand that in such a place knowledge and wisdom, thought and understanding cannot be found but sentiments and emotions can be amply utilized. The Kufans therefore always remained under the control of their emotions and whatever they did it was under the influence of their emotions.

That was why whosoever wanted to incite them, succeeded, and whosoever wanted to entice them, did not fail. Whenever they were threatened, they were terrified; and whenever they were goaded to oppose anyone, they obliged. Whenever they were made bold, they turned so and whenever they were made to betray, they did accordingly; and whenever they were reminded of their old loyalty,

they began to fulfill its conditions:

Kufa had a plethora of emotions but lacked intelligence. It had emotions, not sense; it had a tumult of emotions but ran short of serenity of thought. Therefore, Kufa was expected to do that which happened. When a few generations passed and the events of the world endowed the heterogeneous elements by chemical amalgamation with a particular shape to its temperament, making Kufa, the old mercurial nature gradually vanished.

### **Abdul Malik bin Marwan**

Abdul Malik bin Marwan bin Hakam bin Abul Aas bin Umayya bin Abd Shams bin Abd Manāf bin Qussai bin Kilab was born in Ramadān 23 A.H. His familiar name (Arabic: kunya) was Abu Waleed. He was also known as Abul Mulook (father of kings) because several of his sons sat on the throne in succession. Yahya Ghassāni says: "Abdul Malik was accustomed to sitting near Umm Darda (رضي الله عنها). Once she asked, 'I have heard that you have taken to drinking after being a devotee.' He replied, 'I have turned into a blood-sucker too.' Nāfi' says: "No youth in Madinah was as active, wise, conversant with the Qur'ān and Hadith, religious and ascetic as Abdul Malik." Abu Zanad says: "Sayeed bin Al-Musayyib, Abdul Malik bin Marwan, 'Urwah bin Zubair and Qabisah bin Zuwaib are the scholars of Islamic jurisprudence of Madinah." Ubada bin Muthanna asked, Ibn Umar (رضي الله عنه), "Whom should we consult for verdicts (Literally questions. This refers to questions about Islamic law)" He replied, "Marwan's son is a 'faqih'. You should ask him".

One day when Abdul Malik called on Abu Huraira (رضي الله عنه), he said, "One day this man will become the king of 'Arabia'. Umm Darda (رضي الله عنها) said to Abdul Malik, "I knew beforehand that you would be a king." He asked, "How?" She said, "I did not find anyone better than you both as a speaker and as a listener." Sha'bi says: "Who ever sat in my company became an admirer of my superior knowledge but I have become an admirer of Abdul Malik's excellent knowledge. Whenever I narrated a 'hadith', he always added something to it, and whenever I recited a Verse, he also recited Verses dealing with the same theme.

Dhhibi says, "Abdul Malik heard 'Ahadith' (traditions of the Prophet ﷺ) from Uthman (رضي الله عنه), Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه), Abu Sayeed (رضي الله عنه), Umm Salamah (رضي الله عنها), Barirah (رضي الله عنه) Ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه) and Muawiya (رضي الله عنه) while Urwa, Khalid bin Sa'dân, Raja bin Haiwa, Zuhri, Yunus bin Maisara, Rabia bin Yazid, Ismail bin Obaidullah, Jarir bin Uthman heard traditions from Abdul Malik.

Yahya Ghassani says: "When Muslim bin Oqaba arrived in Madinah, I went to Masjid Nabawi and sat beside Abdul Malik. He asked me whether I was also in his army. I replied in the affirmative. He said: "You have raised your arm against the person who was the first born of all the emigrants of Islam. He is the Prophet's Companion and a descendent of Datun-Nitaqain and for whom the Prophet (ﷺ) did 'Tahneek' (This is the process of chewing dates for a new born infant. In this section Abdul Malik bin Marwan is referring to Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه). And the greatest thing I observed about him was that whenever I met him in the day, I found him observing fast and whenever I met him at night, I always found him standing in 'Salat' (prayer). Remember! Who ever fights against him, will be thrown upside down into Hell by Allâh." However, when Abdul Malik sat on the throne, he sent Hajjaj to fight against Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) and Hajjaj killed him.

Juraj says that following Abdullah bin Zubair's martyrdom, Abdul Malik delivered the following sermon he said:

"I am neither a weak caliph like Uthman (رضي الله عنه) nor a lazy caliph like Muawiya (رضي الله عنه) nor a caliph with weak opinions like Yazid. All the caliphs before me had been eating from treasure (under their possession) I will remedy it with my sword only. You should raise your spears in my support. You hold me responsible to act as the 'Muhajirun' acted yet you yourselves do not act as they did. Remember, I shall torture you to death and the sword will be the judge between you and me. Keep watching what my sword makes of you. I shall tolerate all that you say but I cannot stand your opposition to the ruler. I shall tie their acts around their necks without hearing those who threaten with Allâh's fear."

It was Abdul Malik who first covered the Ka'bah with a silk curtain. Somebody said to him, "Amir al-Muminin! You have aged fast." He



said, "Why not? I spend my best wisdom on the people every Friday." When another person asked him, "Who is the best among men?" He replied, "He who though enjoying high status, shows his humility, prefers renunciation of the world though powerful, and does justice though in authority." When a man who did not know him visited him, he used to tell him, "Keep in mind four things: first, don't tell a lie for I hate it very much; second, answer what I ask; third, don't praise me for I know what I am; and fourth, don't incite me in respect to my subjects for they need my kindness."

Madaini says, "When Abdul Malik was sure of his death, he said, 'I have been longing to be a ascetic since my birth.' Then he called his son Waleed and exhorted him to fear Allāh and avoid internal dissensions and said:

"Be active in war, be an example in good deeds, for war does not call death before its time. Good deeds ensure a good reward and Allāh helps in distress. Be soft in hard situations and shun inviting resentment for a single arrow can easily be broken by anyone but none can break arrows when they are tied together. O Waleed! I make you caliph and in this matter, you must have fear of Allāh. Take care of Hajjaj who has delivered you the caliphate consider him to be your right hand-and sword, he will safeguard you against your foes: don't listen to anyone's complaint against him; and remember! you need Hajjaj more than he needs you and when I die, take 'bay'at' from all and cut off the head of he who refuses."

When he was in the agonies of death, Waleed came to him and began to weep. Abdul Malik said, "What is the use of weeping like a girl? Get ready after my death and put your sword on your shoulder with courage and chop off the head of the man who raises his head even a little, and spare him who keeps silent for he would die of his own disease."

Abdul Malik died in Shawwal 86 A.H. at the age of 63. Ithalbi says that Abdul Malik used to say, "I was born in Ramadan; I was weaned in Ramadan; it was in Ramadan that I finished the Qu'rān; in Ramadan I attained the age of discretion; in Ramadan I was made the heir apparent; in Ramadan I was made caliph and I am afraid I shall die in Ramadan." But when the month of Ramadan passed he was relieved



but he died in Shawwal (the month following Ramadan).

One day a woman came to Abdul Malik and said, "My brother has died leaving six hundred dinars. I am being given only one dinar in inheritance and was told that I deserve only this much." He immediately called Shabi and asked him about it. He said, "The distribution is quite right. The deceased has left two daughters. They get two-thirds, that is 400 dinars and the mother gets one-sixth, that is 100 dinars, the wife one-eighth, that is 75 dinars and 12 brothers will each be getting 24 dinars. Therefore she will get only one dinar at this rate."

### **Important Events of Abdul Malik's Caliphate**

Following Abdullah bin Zubair's martyrdom, Abdul Malik made Hajjaj bin Yusuf the Governor of the Hijaz. Hajjaj pulled down the Ka'bah and removed the part constructed during Abdullah bin Zubair's regime, then he reconstructed it. Hajjaj perpetrated untold atrocities on the venerated Sahabah. Anas رضي الله عنه and other distinguished Sahabah were tied and whipped. He had great hostility for the illustrious Sahabah like Abdullah bin Umar (رضي الله عنه) because he was always frank and loved the truth. Hajjaj's government did not overawe him nor did anything deter him from introducing people to good deeds and preventing them from sin. Hajjaj deputed a man to attack and kill him. As a consequence of this order, during the next Hajj when Abdullah bin Umar (رضي الله عنه) was making Tawaf (circumambulation) of the Ka'bah, Hajjaj's agent pierced his foot with a spear. He succumbed to the injury and died after a few days. Just as the tyrannies that he perpetrated on the Sahabah prove him to be a tyrant, similarly they also make Abdul Malik guilty because it was he who made such an oppressor the Governor of Makkah and Madinah. Hajjaj and Abdul Malik both had some virtues and they had vices in proportion to them.

### **The Mischief of the Khawârij**

At the time when Ibn Zubair's caliphate showed signs of decline and Abdul Malik bin Marwan's agents began propaganda and conspiratorial activities against him in Iraq and Iran, a group of the Khawârij who had been living peacefully in the Iranian provinces, started to become awake and active. Mus'ab bin Zubair's murder and

the domination of Abdul Malik led the people harboring rebellious thoughts to begin to whisper. After the occupation of Iraq, Abdul Malik made Khalid bin Abdullah the Governor of Basra. When Abdul Malik left Iraq and went to Damascus, he wasn't able to concentrate on the 'khawarij' because the Hijaz and Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) demanded his attention more. Becoming free from the problems in the Hijaz after Abdullah bin Zubair's murder, he dismissed the Governors of Basra and Kufa and replaced them with his brother Bishr bin Marwan and instructed him to send Muhallab bin Abi Sofra to Iran to fight against the Khawârij so that he might exterminate them wherever he found them. He also ordered that Muhallab should be authorized to select Basraites and take them with him. Another strong army from among the Kufans was prepared and sent to help Muhallab so that he could stamp out their disruption completely. These same orders were also sent to Muhallab directly. Bishr bin Marwan didn't like the fact that the Amir al-Muminin assigned Muhallab directly. He expected that the mission of disciplining and finishing the Khawârij with the power of assignments, be under his own command and should have been entrusted to him. Muhallab bin Abi Sofra, in compliance with Abdul Malik's orders, left Basra with an army. Bishr bin Marwan from Kufa sent an army under the command of Abdur Rahman bin Mukhnaf to help Muhallab. At the time of departure, he said to Abdur Rahman: "I consider you to be a more able commander than Muhallab. Don't always keep yourself subservient to Muhallab you should sometimes assert and impose your own opinion on him also."

Abdur Rahman met Muhallab at Dar Hurmuz but encamped with his army separately and began to show signs of his independence. After a few days, news reached there that Bishr bin Marwan died and at the time of his death, he had put Khalid bin Abdullah in his place. Hearing this news, the Basraites and Kufans returned to their respective cities. Khalid bin Abdullah tried to make them see reason and even threatened them, but none of them was ready to return to Muhallab. The conditions in Khorasan, on the other hand, were turning from bad to worse. Following Abdullah bin Hazin's death as mentioned previously, the king of Turkistan and Mongolia named Ratbeel began to make military patrols on the border of Khorasan.

Abdullah bin Hazim's son Musa bin Abdullah along with his father's men fled and took shelter in the fort of Termiz (city in southern Uzbekistan) and succeeded in establishing a separate autonomous state.

Musa bin Abdullah fought and defeated the Turks and at the same time was at war with the governors of Abdul Malik. Bukair bin Washah was the governor of Khorasan. Abdul Malik dismissed him and sent Umayya bin Abdullah bin Khalid in his place. Upon his arrival to Merv, one of the major cities of Khorasan, Bukair bin Washah who had been dismissed by Abdul Malik remained in Khorasan. Umayya bin Abdullah put him in charge of the city of Merv. Umayya then went to Balkh, another major city in Khorasan, and attacked Ratbeel and forced him into an agreement, that he would not invade the Muslims in future. After the agreement he left Balkh and while he was returning to Merv, he was attacked by Musa bin Abdullah bin Hazim, but he somehow managed to escape and arrived at Merv. Musa bin Abdullah retreated. When he reached Merv, he saw that Bukair bin Washah had occupied it and was prepared for war. A skirmish took place between Bukair and Umayya then Bukair bin Washah settled down for a possible siege after fortifying the city. Finally, after a few days, they were reconciled. Umayya bin Abdullah, by promising him the governorship of apart of Khorasan, took Merv out of his clutches.

At Dar Hurmuz, Muhallab and Ibn Makhnaf with the small armies that were left with them, after the desertion of the Kufans and Basraites upon the death of Bishr bin Marwan, were at war with the Khawārij and following the withdrawal of their troops were placed in a critical situation. Under these circumstances, Abdul Malik thought it proper to shift Hajjaj bin Yusuf Thaqfi from the governorship of Hijaz and appointed him the governor of Iraq. Therefore, in 75 A.H. he endowed him with the authority to rule Basra and Kufa and sent him to Kufa. He entered Kufa in Ramadan in 75 A.H. sat on the 'mimbar' (usually some steps or other raised podium from where the leader of the prayer on Friday gives his sermon or "kutbah") of the Jama Masjid (Central Mosque) and ordered the people to assemble there.

The Kufans were accustomed to be rude to their rulers. They used to humiliate their Amirs' and governors. They, therefore, came with

pebbles in their hands with the intention of throwing them at the new Amir. But when Hajjaj began his speech, they were terrified and the pebbles in their hands dropped to the floor. Hajjaj in his speech said,

"A lot of turbans and beards are visible here but very soon they are going to be wet with blood. Many heads are present in this assembly, which will soon be chopped off. Amir al-Muminin Abdul Malik examined his quiver and selecting the hardest and the most deadly arrow, shot it at you, in other words, he imposed me on you as your ruler. I will remedy all your ills and lack of discipline and straighten you out completely. You have been the center of much trouble and disruption. Now the time has come for you to be taught a lesson and your eyes to be opened. Amir al-Muminin has given instructions to disburse your salaries and send you to Muhallab to face the Khawārij. After the disbursement of the salaries, you are given three days time. If even a single soul is visible on the fourth day in Kufa, his head will be severed. Remember this is not an empty threat. You will yourselves see with your own eyes. I do what I say."

Hajjaj stood up and went to Darul Emarah (the Amir's headquarter) and began to disburse their salaries. An old man who was shaking due to his old age came and said, "I am an old man. My son is younger than I. Please send him in my place." Hajjaj asked him "What is your name?" He said, "Umair bin Dabi Barjami." Hajjaj said, "Are you the same Umair bin Dabi who had attacked Uthman bin Affan's house?" He said, "Yes." Hajjaj said, "What persuaded you to do such a thing?" He said, "Uthman (رضي الله عنه) had imprisoned my father when he was very old." Hajjaj said, "I don't like for you to remain alive." He ordered that he should be killed and his house ransacked.

On the third day it was announced: "Whosoever stays in his house tonight and does not proceed to join Muhallab's army, he will be slain." Hearing that people began to set out and very soon, a strong army assembled to face the Khawārij under Muhallab's command.

Hajjaj then appointed Hakam bin Ayyub Tha'qfi the Amir of Basra and sent him there. He deputed Sayeed bin Aslam bin Zur'a to go to the Sindh. Muawiya bin Harith Kalabi and his brother Mohammad were part of this army, they brought most of the cities of the area under

their control, and killed or imprisoned the enemy and after accomplishing this, Muawiya bin Harith and his brother Muhammad killed Sayeed.

Hearing the news, Hajjaj sent Maja'a bin Sayeed bin Zur'a who captured the territory and after a year of his rule brought under his control most of the cities of Makran (coastal area that is part of modern Iran and Pakistan) and Darabeel which are adjacent to the Sindh.

Hajjaj made arrangements for Kufa and deputed Urwa bin Mughira bin Sho'ba as his deputy there and he proceeded to Basra. At Basra, he delivered the same kind of lecture he had delivered in Kufa and threatened the deserters of Muhallab.

Sharik bin 'Amr Yeshkuri came to Hajjaj and said, "I am suffering from the hernia. Bishr bin Marwan accepted this excuse. Will you please accept it also and exempt me from going to Muhallab's army." Hajjaj instantly ordered his execution. Seeing that all the Basraites were afraid and began to get ready to join Muhallab.

After expelling the people from Basra and Kufa, Hajjaj also moved towards Muhallab's army. When Muhallab's cantonment was at a distance of 18 miles, he encamped and said, "O Kufans and Basraites! You will stay here unless the Khawârij are totally exterminated." The next order Hajjaj issued created trouble for himself.

The salaries of the army during Mus'ab bin Zubair's regime had been enhanced at the rate of 100 dirhams per head and that increment was still in force and no one had a thought of curtailing it. Hajjaj ordered that all of them should be getting the same salaries they had been getting before Mus'ab bin Zubair's regime, in other words, 100 dirhams per head would be reduced. When Abdullah bin Jarood heard the order, he said, "Our salaries were allowed to continue by Abdul Malik and Bishr bin Marwan. Don't commit the mistake of reducing it."

Hajjaj did not pay any heed to Jarood's advice. He again raised his voice against Hajjaj's order. Masqala bin Karb Abdi said to Abdullah bin Jarood, "It is our duty to comply with the amir's order. It is unbecoming of us to oppose it." Abdullah bin Jarood left Hajjaj's court abusing Masqala. He went to Hakeem bin Majâshi and told him what

took place. He also supported Abdullah. Then most of the soldiers became Jarood's supporters and all of them took an oath at his hands for the purpose of having Hajjaj dismissed and expelled from Iraq. All those under Jarood's command, surrounded Hajjaj's tent.

Hajjaj had only a few persons with him and he was about to be killed or captured but evening set in and they decided to postpone their action and they all returned to their camps. They did not want to kill Hajjaj they only wanted to expel him from Iraq.

At night Hajjaj's friends advised him to leave and go to Abdul Malik. He was in a quandary. Meanwhile there was dissension among his enemies and Abbad bin Haseen Habti became angry with Ibn Jarood and went over to Hajjaj's side. Then Qutaiba bin Muslim Sabra bin Ali Kalabi, Sayeed bin Aslam Kalabi, Jafar bin Abdur Rahman bin Makhnaf Azdi followed suit. In short, six thousand people rallied round him by morning and at that time, there was a fierce battle between the two opposing sides.

Hajjaj and his men were beaten and Abdullah bin Jarood was victorious but unfortunately, an arrow hit Abdullah in the neck causing instant death. With his death, Hajjaj's defeat turned into victory. Many of Jarood's men were killed and many asked for security of life for surrender and rejoined his army. Hajjaj cut off eighteen heads of Jarood's main supporters and sent the heads to Muhallab. Muhallab had them fixed on the heads of spears to intimidate the Khawârij. While the fight between Hajjaj and Jarood was going on news came from Basra that a tribe of Sowan named Zanj that had settled in the vicinity of Basra, turned rebellious.

After the killing of Ibn Jarood, Hajjaj gave a small army to his son Hafs to discipline them. He wrote to his deputy in Kufa to send an army to stamp out the new uprising. After several encounters, it was put down.

The groups of Khawârij drawn from the cities of Iran, Khorasan and Iraq, had assembled at Dar Hurmuz to face Muhallab and were busy trying to fight and defeat him and then to capture Basra.

When the supporting armies from Basra and Kufa started arriving in quick succession, Muhallab and Abdur Rahman bin Makhnaf who

stood against the Khawārij, received a boost. Prior to that, they were fighting defensively due to a shortage of soldiers and had stopped the Khawārij from advancing. However, after becoming stronger, they began to fight offensively and pushed the Khawārij back to Garzoon. The Khawārij entrenched and fortified themselves near Garzoon and began to fight. Seeing this, Muhallab had a moat dug and made a defensive wall around his cantonment. Abdur Rahman kept his army aloof from Muhallab, from the beginning of the engagement. He had also established his own cantonment.

Muhallab sent word to Abdur Rahman that there was a danger of a night attack and so it was advised to dig a moat out around his cantonment. Abdur Rahman replied that he should rest assured; their swords would serve as a moat. He encamped on an open field.

One night the Khawārij attacked Muhallab but because of the moat they could not advance against him. Having failed there, they moved towards Abdur Rahman. The way was open and clear. They kept advancing and started killing. The sleeping soldiers could not withstand the attack and fled in all directions. Abdur Rahman along with only a few soldiers were able to fight and he was killed along with his soldiers at the hands of the Khawārij.

Muhallab and Abdur Rahman were two commanders, Muhallab's army consisted of the Basraites and Abdur Rahman's army was made up of Kufans. The Kufan army suffered a great loss. The news reached Hajjaj and he deputed Attab bin Warqa in place of Abdur Rahman and clearly instructed him that he should remain under Muhallab's command and obey him. Attab resented this and it led to a rift between them.

Attab wrote to Hajjaj to recall him. Hajjaj accepted his request. Then all the Kufans were placed directly under Muhallab's command. Muhallab deputed his own son Habib bin Muhallab to take command of the Kufan army and they were stationed at Nishapur for a year, and continued fighting against the Khawārij. Later there erupted some discord among the Khawārij and they began to fight in two groups. Muhallab did not attack them at that time but was patient. Then one faction fought and expelled the other towards Tabristan, Muhallab



attacked the victorious group and killed them. So, in 77 A.H. he was finally able to get rid of the disruption of the Khawārij.

The Khawārij were such valiant fighters that sometimes they defeated an army ten or twenty times their number. Once one thousand Khawārij made an army of fifty thousand retreat near Kufa.

It was Muhallab alone, who was a hundred percent successful against the Khawārij. When he returned to Hajjaj in Kufa after the victory, Hajjaj held a grand court and made the Muhallab sit by his side. Muhallab had seven sons and all of them had shown exemplary valor against the Khawārij. As a reward, they were given an increment of two thousand dirhams per year.

Hajjaj sent an army after the run away Khawārij and defeated them near Tabristan. In 76 AH, another group of the Khawārij, under the leadership of Saleh bin Masrah, staged an uprising. Abdur Malik's brother Muhammad bin Marwan, the Amir of Mosul, deputed an army to deal with it. After many encounters, Saleh was killed. His place was taken by Shabib who took his group to Madain. Hajjaj started sending other troops after them but he could not suppress them. Shabib had only one thousand men. Once he stayed in Kufa unchallenged along with his men and then left. Hajjaj sent fifty thousand men to face those one thousand men and the smaller force routed the larger one. Finally, those one thousand men along with their chief Shabib were annihilated.

### **Hajjaj and Muhallab Honored**

For Abdul Malik bin Marwan, the greatest danger next to Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) was the challenge of the Khawārij. Had he remained indifferent to Khawārij and had he not taken their threat seriously and had he not become busy planning their extermination, then the provinces of Khorasan, Iraq and Persia would have gone out of his hands. No one was better suited for the governorship of Iraq to put down the rebellions than Hajjaj. He came to Iraq and fulfilled his obligations excellently. The selection of Muhallab for disciplining the Khawārij was also right. Then after years of struggle and crowned with success he handed over to Hajjaj's control Kufa and Basra, which



included Khorasan and Sajistan but excluding the rest of Iraq. He made Hajjaj the leader of all the Islamic countries of the east. Hajjaj then made Muhallab bin Abi Sofra and Obaidullah bin Abu Bakra the Amirs of Khorasan and Sajistan respectively. Muhallab, up to this point a famous general, was honored by being made the Amir of Khorasan.

Muhallab lived in Basra until 80 A.H. and sent his son Habib, as the Amir of Khorasan on his own behalf. He went to Khorasan and in accordance with his father's instructions did not disturb Umayya bin Abdullah and his staff nor did he reduce their honor. Hajjaj married Muhallab's daughter Hind bint Muhallab and in this way, he came to be related to Hajjaj.

In 80 A.H., Muhallab himself went to Khorasan and took over the reign of the country and taking five thousand men advanced towards Mawaraunnahr (between the Amu [Oxus] and Syr rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) and surrounded Kush city. At that time, the relative of the king of Khutan came to him and asked for help. Muhallab sent his son Yazid to accompany him. Yazid killed the king of Khutan and gave the territory to his relative and received a written agreement, in keeping with his father's instructions, he returned.

It was during that same period Muhallab gave four thousand men to his son, Habib, to invade Bukhara. The governor of Bukhara fought against these four thousand men, the result was a victory for Habib and defeat for the people of Bukhara. Habib returned to Muhallab with a large amount of spoils of war. The siege of Kush continued for two years. At last, the besieged decided it was better to pay the 'jizya' (a tax on non Muslims under Islamic rule which exonerates them from military service) and Muhallab, following the reconciliation, returned from there.

### **The Betrayal of the People of Kush city and Huraith bin Qatna**

When Muhallab came to Merv, the capital of Khorasan and then moved to the city of Kush, he left Mughira his son as Amir in his absence. While the siege of Kush was continuing, the news of Mughira's death reached Muhallab. Muhallab deputed his son, Yazid as the Administrator of Merv and sent him there with thirty men.

When he reached a pass near Bast, he confronted a raiding party of five hundred Turks. The Turks demanded all their possessions. Yazid refused. At last, one of his associates made them agree to take a little money. They took it and went away but immediately returned and told Yazid and his troops that they would not be spared without surrendering all their belongings.

Yazid with his thirty men fought with them and killed their leader and forced them to run away. Upon his arrival in Merv, he began to rule in place of his brother. A short time after that incident, Muhallab made peace with the people of Kush and returned. It was agreed that the inhabitants of Kush would hand over their king's sons to the Muslims and they would remain in their custody until the inhabitants of Kush paid the agreed amount to the Muslims. Muhallab had left Huraith bin Qatna there to collect the amount and return the boys. When Muhallab left Kush and arrived at Balkh, he sent word to Yazid and Huraith bin Qatna: "Don't return the boys after collecting the payment until you enter Balkh."

Muhallab's intention was to warn of the danger, which Huraith had to face. Huraith at once showed the letter to the people of Kush and said to them, "If you pay me the amount of 'jizya' at once, I shall hand over your boys to you now and tell Amir Muhallab that I had given back the boys to the people of Kush after collecting the amount, before this letter reached me." The people of Kush paid the money and took back the boys.

Upon his return from Kush, the marauding Turks treated Huraith in the same way they had treated Yazid. There was a fight and many of Huraith's men were killed and many were captured and they were released only after paying a ransom. When Harith reached Muhallab, the latter had him lashed twenty times for violating his orders. After the punishment, he swore that he would kill Muhallab. When Muhallab came to know of it, he sent for Huraith's brother Thabit bin Qatna and made him understand the situation in a calm way. He called Harith to him and Huraith repeated his impertinent oath. Muhallab ignored it and dismissed him. Huraith and Thabit feared for their positions and taking their three hundred men with them, fled

from him and went to Musa bin Abdullah bin Hazim at Termiz. Musa bin Abdullah, as mentioned earlier had founded an independent state and was at war with the governor of Khorasan. This took place in 82 A.H.

### **Muhallab's Death and His Will**

Muhallab was shocked at his son Mughira's death. He did not live long after he arrived back in Merv. In the later months of 82 A.H., he died of a disease in Merv. His valor, good nature and loyalty were well known. His character was never involved in a breach of trust, disloyalty or rebellion. He thought it essential to obey and comply with the orders of the Amir of the time. At the time of his death he made his son Yazid the Governor of Khorasan and the other son the Imam (leader) of the Salat (prayer). He called all his sons to him and exhorted them saying:

"I want you to fear Allāh and treat your relatives kindly, for these acts prolong life, increase wealth and offspring. I warn you against giving up the fear of Allāh and kind treatment for their renunciation leads to Hell, causes disgrace and decreases offspring. It is compulsory for you to obey the Amir and agree with the Muslims. It is fitting that your actions be better than your words. Avoid answering impulsively and safeguard your tongue from a slip, for a man can control the slip of the feet but the slip of the tongue ruins him. Give the people their dues because this just and equitable action is better than sitting and gossiping in the morning and in the evening and talking uselessly. Don't be deceived by flatterers, prefer generosity to miserliness, revive goodness and try to do good, be active and alert in war and for this valor is necessary. When there is a confrontation, destiny or death falls from heaven. If the man is prepared to act and acts cleverly, he achieves success. If he gets nervous, he fails but Allāh's Order dominates all. Make the recitation and learning of the Qur'ān, the application of the 'Sunnah', and respect for the pious compulsory for yourself. Avoid talking unnecessarily at meetings."

## **Hajjaj bin Yusuf and Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad**

It has been mentioned above that in 78 A.H., Hajjaj had deputed Muhallab and Obaidullah bin Abi Bakra as governors of Khorasan, and Sajistan and Sindh respectively. Sindh and Sajistan had continuously been under attack by the Hindus from the east and by the Turks and the Mongols from the north. Hence, Hajjaj gave Hamyan bin Adi an active, agile and well-armed division of an army and stationed them at Kerman (city, provincial capital, and province in southeastern Iran) with the instructions to help the Governors of Sajistan and Sindh when needed. Obaidullah bin Abi Bakra arrived in his province and became busy with its affairs. Hamyan bin Adi, seeing a big army under his command at Kerman, rebelled and instead of helping Obaidullah, started attacking his province. When informed, Hajjaj sent Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad bin Ash'ath to discipline Hamyan bin Adi. Abdur Rahman defeated and drove him away and after staying for a few days at Kerman returned. It has been mentioned above that the king of Turkistan named Ratbeel had made peace with the Muslims by promising them to pay taxes. When Obaidullah came, he continued to pay him the taxes but then prepared to rebel against him. Ratbeel controlled Badakhshan, Kafiristan and Afghanistan up to Tibet. Obaidullah invaded his territory. He fled and lured Obaidullah into following him and took him to a place where the journey was very arduous. Finally, the Muslims were surrounded inside the passes of a very mountainous area. Many were killed. Shuraih bin Haris was also killed there. Those who returned, were in a very miserable condition. When Hajjaj was informed of the destruction of the army, he reported to Abdul Malik and sought his permission to invade Ratbeel's territory. Abdul Malik granted the permission and Hajjaj took twenty thousand men from Kufa and twenty thousand infantry from Basra and made Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad bin Ash'ath the commander of these veteran armies. Meanwhile news arrived of the death of Obaidullah bin Abi Bakra in Sajistan.

Hajjaj granted Abdur Rahman credentials and a certificate of Governorship of Sajistan and sent him to invade Ratbeel's territory.

When Abdur Rahman arrived there with the Islamic forces and Ratbeel was informed of it, Ratbeel was extremely nervous but could do nothing about it. Abdur Rahman began to conquer his country and took care to depute guards near passes and valleys as he moved forward. In short, he conquered half of his country and postponed a further advance until the following year. He informed Hajjaj of the victory by letter and also told him that the rest of the country remained to be conquered which would be done the following year so that he could consolidate his position and manage the affairs of the conquered territory efficiently and the army could also be refreshed.

Hajjaj was very angry when he read the letter. He at once ordered him to continue his advance, slay Ratbeel's soldiers in captivity and pull down their forts. He had written a second and third letter of the same content before the first one reached him. In the third letter he said: "If you obey my order, good; if you disobey, deem yourself dismissed and your brother Ishaq bin Mohammad bin Ash'ath will be the commander of the army." Those three orders reached Abdur Rahman one after another. Abdur Rahman read them and called the army together and made the following speech:

"I had decided our present strategy after consulting you that we would manage the conquered territories of the Turks and after fortifying ourselves and completing the required preparations, we would conquer the rest of the territory the following year. However, Hajjaj writes to us to fight with them without making any further delay. He does not care for your fatigue and the necessity of your recuperation. This is the same country where our brothers were destroyed. I am also your brother and a man like you. If you are ready, fight and move forward. I am also with you.

Hearing the speech, all the Kufans and Basraites flew into a rage and said in one voice, "We won't obey Hajjaj." Ail bin Wasla said, "Hajjaj is Allāh's enemy. Dismiss him and take the oath with Abdur Rahman bin Ash'ath bin Rabia." All unanimously cried out, "Yes, yes. We all agree to it." Abdur Rahman stood up and asked them, "Let us go and turn Allāh's enemy Hajjaj out of our city." Hearing it, all rushed to take the oath at his hands and all took a pledge that they would not rest until Hajjaj was expelled from Iraq. At that same time, Abdur

Rahman sent word to Ratbeel and an agreement for peace was at once signed on the condition that if they succeeded in the expulsion of Hajjaj, all taxes on Ratbeel's territory would be excused. If Hajjaj won, Ratbeel would prevent Hajjaj's soldiers from entering his country and fight against him.

The army therefore left the conquered territory and returned to Iraq. When Hajjaj was informed about it, he wrote to Abdul Malik about the gravity of the situation and requested him to send an army to help him. Abdul Malik did accordingly. When Muhallab came to know the details, he wrote to Hajjaj in support: "Let the Iraqis return home but for the time don't do anything with them in the least."

Hajjaj did not appreciate his advice he actually came to harbor an ill feeling against the Iraqis in his heart. He misunderstood Muhallab and Hajjaj felt that Muhallab being the governor of Khorasan, might also have been their adviser and was sympathetic to them. When Abdul Malik's army arrived, Hajjaj took it and moved beyond Basra, and arrived at Tustar (in Khuzestan, an Iranian province at the top of the Arabian Gulf) and sent ahead a division. Abdur Rahman had also come nearer. His soldiers defeated and routed Hajjaj's soldiers and put a good number of them to death.

Thus compelled Hajjaj returned to Basra and turned to a place named Zawia. Abdur Rahman entered Basra directly. The Basraites took the oath at his hands. Hajjaj recalled Muhallab's advice and then realized that what he had written was quite right. The Basraites were sick of Hajjaj's strictness and all were bent on annulling Abdul Malik's caliphate and fighting with Hajjaj.

This occurred at the end of Dhul Hijja 81 A.H. Then a series of battles between Hajjaj and Abdur Rahman started in the beginning of Ramadan 82 A.H. First Hajjaj won, then Abdur Rahman won. However, a battle that took place on 29 Muharram 82 A.H. saw Abdur Rahman badly defeated. He took his defeated men and went to Kufa and occupied Kufa's Darul Emarah (the Amir's headquarter). Following Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad's defeat, the Basraites took the oath at the hands of Abdur Rahman bin Abbas bin Rabia bin Harith bin Abdul Mutallib and continued the chain of battles and

confrontations with Hajjaj. Abdur Rahman bin Abbās faced Hajjaj ferociously. His preoccupation with these battles and confrontations gave a respite to Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad and enabled him to occupy Kufa. At last, Abdur Rahman bin Abbās, along with a good number of the Basraites, advanced towards Kufa and joined Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad. Hajjaj entered Basra and appointed Hakeem bin Ayyub Thaqfi to the post of Governor of Basra, and proceeded towards Kufa and encamped at Dairqarah. From the other side Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad came out and made fortifications at Dairjam. Moats, fortifications and walls were made by both sides and the battle began. It continued for a long time. Everyday men from both sides came onto the battlefield and pushed back the other side but they did not wage a decisive battle. At last, Abdul Malik sent his son Abdullah and his brother, Muhammad bin Marwan along with a large army to Kufa and conveyed through them a message to the Iraqis:

"We dismiss Hajjaj. We will fix the salaries of the Iraqis at par with those of the Syrians and Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad will be given the Governorship of the province he likes."

The message hurt Hajjaj very much. He stopped Abdullah and Mohammad from conveying the message and wrote a letter to Abdul Malik saying, "Your policy will never make the Iraqis your subjects and they will grow more headstrong." But Abdul Malik disapproved of Hajjaj's views and Abdullah and Mohammad communicated his message to the Iraqis.

To the Iraqis it spelt a great victory and Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad was ready to recognize it. But the army did not agree to it and raised its voice against it and renewed its oath for annulling Abdul Malik's oath. Grasping the situation, both Abdullah and Mohammad left the army with Hajjaj and returned to Abdul Malik. Again, the battle between the parties raged with renewed vigor, fresh preparations and strategies it continued in this manner for a year. Daily they came out fought and returned to their bases in the evening. In those battles, Abdur Rahman had an edge over his rival Hajjaj who suffered heavy losses. But Hajjaj continued to receive regular reinforcements from Syria. At last, on Jumad al-Thani 83 A.H. there was a decisive battle. It went in favor of Hajjaj due to a certain set of



accidental occurrences and he at once entered Kufa and occupied it. Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad returned to Basra and expelled Hajjaj's governor from there, and captured Basra. Hajjaj started taking the oath from the Kufans and who ever hesitated, was instantly killed.

Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad collected a large army at Basra and intended to attack Hajjaj. Hearing this news, Hajjaj took a large Syrian army and moved towards Basra. The battle began on 1, Shaban 83 A.H. It continued fiercely until 15 Shaban. Hajjaj suffered defeat several times but he remained steady. Abdul Malik bin Muhallab was also present in his army. When Abdul Malik bin Muhallab attacked Abdur Rahman with his men, Abdur Rahman and his men reversed their position and ransacked Hajjaj's camp and forced him to runaway from the battlefield and they returned victorious to their base however they were stunned and terrified by a sudden attack by Abdul Malik bin Muhallab. They had to retreat. Many of them died, falling into the moat and many were killed and many escaped.

Hajjaj who had suffered a defeat returned and occupied Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad's camp. After being defeated, Abdur Rahman went to Ratbeel the king of Turkistan, by passing through Sos, Sabur, Kerman, Ziranj and Bist. Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad's men assembled at Sajistan and made Abdur Rahman bin Abbas bin Rabia bin Abdul Mutallib the Imam of their Salats. They called all their colleagues from all directions and sent word to Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad to return and occupy Khorasan. He replied that Khorasan was ruled over by Yazid bin Muhallab and it would not be easy to snatch it from him. But they insisted and Abdur Rahman yielded to their pressure and he returned from Ratbeel. They numbered twenty thousand. He took them to Herat and captured it. Yazid bin Muhallab came with his army. When they came to face each other, Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad's men began leaving before the beginning of the battle. Under compulsion, he fought supported by only a few men. Many were killed and captured. Abdur Rahman fled to the Sindh. Yazid stopped his army from pursuing him and Abdur Rahman arrived in Sindh.

Yazid took the captives of Herat to Merv and from there, he sent them to Hajjaj. Muhammad bin Sad bin Abi Waqaas was also among them and he was executed by the order of Hajjaj. Abdur Rahman bin



Ash'ath left Sindh and went to Ratbeel. There he contracted tuberculosis. Hajjaj wrote to Ratbeel to cut off his head and send it to him assuring him that he would exempt him from paying taxes for ten years in lieu thereof. Ratbeel complied, killed Abdur Rahman bin Muhammad and sent his head to Hajjaj. This took place in 84 A.H.

### **The Population of the City of Wasit**

You have read above that Hajjaj had to ask for help from Abdul Malik repeatedly in order to face Abdur Rahman bin Muhammad. When Abdur Rahman came to Sajistan dethroned, Hajjaj had a big Syrian army under his command. He had no respite from the Kufans and Basraites because they had fought against him along with Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad. Therefore keeping the Syrian army with him for an extended period was very essential. First, Hajjaj issued instructions to the Kufans to keep the Syrians with them in their homes. But after a few days, the Syrians started misbehaving with the Kufan's women folk. When Hajjaj was informed of it, he thought it proper to establish a separate military headquarters for the Syrian army. He therefore constituted a body of veteran soldiers to select a suitable site for it. They saw an ascetic who was purifying a place. When he was asked to explain the reason, he replied that they had read in their scripture that they would build a house of Allāh on that site. They came back to Hajjaj and narrated the incident. Hajjaj built a mosque there and established a military headquarter around it. That was the beginning of the city of Wasit. It occurred in 83 A.H.

### **Yazid bin Muhallab Dismissed**

After freeing himself from the problems of Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad, Hajjaj continued to deal harshly with the Iraqis. He began to pick out their leaders and murder them. No household of any significance in Iraq, Kufa and Basra was left where a member was not killed by Hajjaj's order and they had to suffer humiliation from him. Only Muhallab's household was spared due to its loyalty to Hajjaj. Yazid bin Muhallab was the Governor of Khorasan and obedient to Abdul Malik and Hajjaj. Hajjaj called Yazid to Kufa several times but every time he was in the midst of some engagement in Khorasan and made some excuse and failed to visit Kufa. Hajjaj, who was suspicious

by nature misunderstood Yazid and made up his mind to take away from him of the Governorship of Khorasan. He began to write letters to Abdul Malik containing complaints against Yazid. Each time Abdul Malik wrote back to Hajjaj that Muhallab and his sons were loyal supporters and they deserved all possible concessions. However, Hajjaj continued his moves against them. At last getting sick of constant complaints, Abdul Malik wrote to him, "Since you insist on your proposal, I permit you to choose anyone you like for the Governorship of Khorasan. In order to prevent the problem of Khorasan getting complicated and saving Khorasan from being captured by another Governor, Hajjaj first of all sent word to Yazid that after handing over Khorasan to his brother Mofaddal bin Muhallab he should come to him. Yazid was packing for the journey when he received Hajjaj's order as well as the letter of Governorship in the name of Mofaddal. Yazid said to his brother "Don't be deceived by this letter of Governorship of Khorasan although he has appointed you to this post after a short time he will dismiss you too." Saying this, he left for Merv in Rabia al-Thani 85 A.H. Yazid proved right. Hajjaj dismissed Mofaddal bin Muhallab after nine months and deputed Qutaiba bin Muslim instead.

### **Musa bin Hazim**

It has already been mentioned that Musa bin Abdullah bin Hazim had founded an independent state at Termiz and that Huraith and Thabit, Qatna Khazai's sons, fled from Muhallab and went to Musa bin Abdullah at Termiz. When Muhallab became the Governor of Khorasan, he did not disturb Musa and exhorted his sons, "Always leave Musa alone and forgive him for if there is no Musa, somebody else from among Banu Qais will be the Governor of Khorasan" When Abdur Rahman bin Mohamunad was defeated by Yazid bin Muhallab at Herat, Abdur Rahman bin Mohammad and Abdur Rahman bin Abbas' men who fled from the conflict with Yazid, went directly to Musa bin Abdullah at Termiz. When Ratbeel chopped off Abdur Rahman bin Mohamunad's head and sent it to Hajjaj, Abdur Rahman's men fled from Ratbeel and went to Musa bin Abdullah and took refuge at Termiz. In this way, Musa bin Abdullah came to have eight thousand Arabs under his command. Both brothers, Huraith and Thabit, served as commanders and Musa bin Abdullah was an independent king. Huraith

and Thabit said to Musa, "The people of Bukhara and all the Turkish chiefs are displeased with Yazid bin Muhallab. If we let them be with us, we can expel Yazid bin Muhallab and occupy Khorasan ourselves. Musa said, "If we expel Yazid from Khorasan, some other governor of Abdul Malik' will occupy it and we will not be able to save Khorasan. It is better to expel Abdul Malik's governors from Turkistan. We then would be able to maintain our hold on that territory because Abdul Malik's troops will not have an approach, and the Turks and the Mongols who are present near the borders will help us." Following this decision, all the Governors of Abdul Malik were expelled from the area and Musa bin Abdullah's government became strong and stable.

After a short time the Turks, the Mongols and the Tibetans invaded Musa's country jointly. The leader of the Turks along with ten thousand soldiers were stationed on a mound, Huraith bin Qatna attacked them. The attack was so fierce that the Turks had to take shelter behind the mound. It was during that confusion and uproar that an arrow hit Huraith on the forehead. The wound proved fatal and he died after two days. Because evening had set in, the fight was postponed. The next day Musa attacked and vanquished the Turks and returned with a good deal of spoils of war to their fort at Termiz. After the death of Huraith, his brother Thabit bin Qatna, taking a wrong idea about Musa's intentions parted with him. He left Termiz and halted at Hoshra and began to rally the Arabs and non-Arabs round him. When Musa left with an army to fight with him, the people of Bukhara, Kush and Naf stood up in support of Thabit. Musa had to return to Termiz helpless. After a few days, all the Turks assembled and taking Thabit bin Qatna with them laid siege to Termiz with a staggering eight thousand soldiers. Musa defended with great courage. Thabit was killed and the Turks became disorganized and left raising the siege.

Only a short time had passed following this confusion when Yazid bin Muhallab after having been dismissed from the governorship of Khorasan, left for Kufa and in his place his brother Mofaddal bin Muhallab was chosen as the governor of Khorasan. Immediately after taking control he gave an army to Uthman bin Masood and sent him from Merv to invade Musa bin Abdullah bin Hazim and wrote to his own brother Mud'rik bin Muhallab who lived in Balkh to set out with his army to launch an attack on Termiz. Moreover, he

wrote to Ratbeel and Tarkhoon, the Turkish kings, to arrive there with their troops to help Uthman bin Masood. Those Turkish chiefs who had already grown jealous of Musa and had suffered defeat at his hands repeatedly, immediately left with their armies for Termiz. His enemies converged on his territory from four different directions compelling him to remain besieged in the fort. The siege laid by those massive armies continued for two months and there was no end in sight. At last, Musa bin Abdullah said to his men, "We can not exercise self restraint any more. It is more fitting that we attack the enemies all of a sudden." All agreed to the proposal. Musa deputed his nephew Nadar bin Sulaiman in the city and the fort and exhorted him, "If I am killed, don't surrender the city and the fort to Uthman bin Masood rather surrender them to Mudrik bin Muhallab."

Musa deputed one-third of his men to face Uthman with the instructions not to begin the attack first and taking two-thirds of the men attacked the flank led by Tarkhoon and Ratbeel. Unable to face Musa they retreated. Musa chased them for a great distance. When he returned, the people of Saghad and other Turks blocked his way to the fort. Renewed fighting began. He was surrounded on all sides. Uthman bin Masood also turned his attention to him. First Musa's horse was killed and then he also followed it fighting bravely.

After having ruled over Termiz independently for fifteen years, Musa who came from the tribe of Qais left this world. Mofaddal wrote the letter of the good tidings to Hajjaj, but the latter was not happy. Nadar bin Sulaiman surrendered Termiz to Mudrik and Mudrik gave it to Uthman.

### **The Beginning of the Islamic Coins**

Among the many firsts attributed to Abdul Malik bin Marwan, it was during his regime that the Muslims for the first time cast and introduced their own coins. Until then, Roman coins were in currency in Syria, Arabia and Egypt. In Iraq, the Iranian coins were in use. In Arabia, there was neither a strong government nor were there Arabic coins. Roman coins had been in circulation in all those countries since ancient times. When the Islamic Sultanate was established and it extended from Balkh and Jaihoon to the Atlantic Ocean, still no one thought of introducing Islamic coins.

By chance Abdul Malik bin Marwan happened to write a few letters to the Emperor of Rome. In accordance with the Islamic way, he wrote "There is no true god but Allah and Muhammad is his Messenger" and prayers for the Prophet (ﷺ) on the top of these letters. The Emperor wrote back to him saying, "Don't mention your Allah and the Prophet (ﷺ) on the top of your letters. We don't like it. If you don't give it up, we will cast in our mint coins, which will be bearing your Prophet's name in an insulting manner and then send them into circulation and that will hurt you more."

Abdul Malik was very concerned and disconcerted while going through that letter. He sought counsel from Khalid bin Yazid bin Muawiya. He said to him, "Stop the circulation of the Roman coins in your country, mint your own coins and put them into circulation." Abdul Malik liked the idea. He set up a mint and had 14-carat dirhams minted which weighed 5 'mashas' - each. Then Hajjaj had قل هو الله أحد (Say He is Allah, One) minted on one side of the dirham and dinar. Abdul Malik proclaimed that from that time forth only Arabic coins would be accepted in payment of taxes. By this method, the Arabic dinar and dirham became circulated in all the countries.

Some points regarding important events remain to be mentioned. For example, Abdul Malik bin Marwan went on the Hajj pilgrimage for the first time in 75 A.H. after becoming caliph. In 77 A.H., the fort of Harqla was conquered. That same year Abdul Malik's brother Abdul Aziz bin Marwan the Governor of Egypt, pulled down the Jama Masjid (the Grand or Main Mosque) and reconstructed it and expanded it from all sides. In 81 A.H., he won Qaliqala from the Romans. In 82 A.H., the Fort of Senan was brought under possession. Mofaddal bin Muhallab, the Governor of Khorasan, after becoming free from the trouble in Khorasan by killing of Musa bin Abdullah, occupied Badghais. In 84 A.H. Abdullah bin Abdul Malik conquered Masisa from the Romans. In 85 A.H. Abdul Aziz bin Abu Hatim bin Noman Bahli populated the city of Ardabil (town in northwestern Iran, 38 miles from the Caspian Sea). In Jamad al-Awwal 85 A.H., Abdul Malik's brother Abdul Aziz bin Marwan died in Egypt and Abdul Malik appointed his own son Abdullah, as the Governor of Egypt in his place.

## **Succession of Waleed and Sulaiman**

Abdul Malik remained engrossed in the thought of how to dismiss his brother Abdul Aziz from being the heir apparent and install his own sons in his place. The task was not simple because there was always the risk of inviting opposition from the people at large. When he received the news of Abdul Aziz's death, Abdul Malik found an easy opportunity to see his wish fulfilled. In Ramadan 86 A.H. therefore, he issued commands to all his Governors and Administrators of the Provinces to take the oath for Waleed and Sulaiman on the night of Eid ul Fitr (the holiday following the fasting of Ramadan), that being the first day of Shawwal. The oath was taken on the fixed day in all the territories for the succession of both Waleed and Sulaiman.

The administrator of Madinah was Hisham bin Ismail Makhzumi. When he asked the inhabitants of Madinah to take the oath, all obeyed but Sayeed bin Musayyib refused. Hisham had him caught and lashed, and after he took him in publicity, threw him into prison. When Abdul Malik found out about it, he wrote Hisham a letter saying: "You have committed a mistake in dealing harshly with Sayeed bin Musayyib, because the latter harbors neither animosity nor opposition nor hypocrisy. Such a person should not have been hurt."

## **The Death of Abdul Malik bin Marwan**

After taking the oath for Waleed and Sulaiman, Abdul Malik did not live more than a month. He died of a disease on Thursday the 15<sup>th</sup> of Shawwal 85 A.H. corresponding to 19 October 705 A.C. Abdul Malik lived for 13 years 3 months and 23 days following Abdullah bin Zubair's martyrdom and that was the period of his caliphate. At the time of his death, he called his sons and exhorted them saying: "I want you to keep fearing Allāh for it is the fear of Allāh that is the best adornment and the best refuge. Your elders ought to have affection for the youth and the youth should respect the elders. Always honor the opinion and counsel of the Muslims and avoid opposition because these are the jaws with which you chew and these are the teeth with which you bite. Accommodate the wise for they deserve it."

Then he mentioned things, which have been recorded before in the introductory chapter on Abdul Malik. After that, he breathed his last. Then the people took the oath at Waleed bin Abdul Malik's hands. Abdul Malik had 15 or 16 sons and several daughters. Among his wives were the daughters of Yazid bin Muawiya, the daughter of Ali (رضي الله عنه) and the daughter of Abdullah bin Jafar (رضي الله عنه). Waleed and Sulaiman were born of Walada bint Abbas.

### **Summary**

Abdul Malik bin Marwan was one of the most famous and fortunate caliphs of the Banu Umayyah. He succeeded in the amalgamation of the entire Islamic world with a strong center. He removed the dissention that was created following Uthman's martyrdom and re-established the Islamic government. He adopted stern and violent measures to do this work and in the way of an excuse, he used to say: "If Abu Bakr Siddiq (رضي الله عنه) and Umar bin Khatab (رضي الله عنه) had to face such ignorant and headstrong people, they would have done what I have done." Abdul Malik made the government of Banu Umayyah firmly rooted, which had become quite uncertain and weak.

Abdul Malik combined in his nature strictness, wisdom and truthfulness. We have to appreciate his courage and determination. The major blunder he committed was that he gave Hajjaj more power and authority than he deserved and Hajjaj employed his tyrannical measures to the full. But such an error is possible to be committed by a ruler who wants his government to be firmly established and stabilized.

It was Obaidullah bin Zeyad, Hajjaj bin Yusuf Thaqfi and Muhallab bin Abi Sofra who were responsible for the series of successes of Abdul Malik. During his regime, the Muslims conquered many countries and their bickering and internal conflicts vanished one by one. On the basis of his achievements during his 13 year long caliphate, he is regarded as one of the most popular and successful caliphs. He was also a grand and powerful caliph. He ranks high in respect of knowledge and virtue. From the viewpoint of valor and military skill, he is counted as one of the brave and well-known generals. At the juncture of his death, we have come out of a tempestuous age and entered one that may be characterized as peaceful and serene.

## Chapter 2

# **Caliphate of Banu Umayyah** (Second Phase)

### **Waleed bin Abdul Malik**

Abul Abbas Waleed bin Abdul Malik bin Marwan was born in 50 A.H. and at the age of 36, following his father's death, he sat on the throne as caliph. Since he was brought up in a pampered way, he was deficient in studies and lacked knowledge and virtue. After the funeral of his father he went to Central Mosque and delivered a sermon saying:

"O people! No one can push the man into the rear that Allāh pushes to the forefront and no one can push the man to the forefront that Allāh pushes into the rear. Death was in the ancient knowledge of Allāh which He has made inevitable for all the prophets and the righteous, Allāh has made the responsible of this "Ummah" (community) a man who makes up his mind to discipline the criminals treat the men of virtue and righteousness mildly and maintain the limits of the Shariah (system of Islamic law). He has a mind to perform Hajj, declare Jihad (literally: struggle; In Islam it means fighting or struggling in the way of Allāh) on the borders and to keep attacking the enemies of the religion. He wants neither to be lazy nor to exceed the limits in this



matter. O people obey the caliph and maintain unity among the Muslims. The man who disobeys will see his head broken and he who keeps silent will die of his own disease".

The people then took 'bai'at', (the oath of allegiance) for the caliphate at his hands. After he became the caliph, he maintained the status quo by retaining Hajjaj in a place of authority. Hajjaj appointed Qutaiba bin Muslim Bahli, the Administrator of Rayy, as the Governor of Khorasan in place of Mufaddal bin Muhallab. Qutaiba bin Muslim conquered the territories up to China and Turkistan. In the west Musa bin Nusayr, the Governor of Africa, extended the Islamic conquest through Morocco into Spain. Waleed's brother Maslama bin Abdul Malik won many cities and forts from the Romans.

Mohammed bin Qasim bin Thaqfi who was Hajjaj's nephew and son-in-law conquered the Sindh and India. Waleed appointed his cousin Umar bin Abdul Aziz the Governor of Madinah Munawwara. He had the Mosque of the Prophet ﷺ reconstructed under Umar bin Abdul Aziz's supervision. He incorporated the Prophet's wives' rooms into the mosque and expanded it. The Roman Emperor also sent precious stones and experienced masons as gifts to Waleed. Waleed did a significant amount of welfare work. He built new roads, opened new schools in villages and towns, constructed inns, dug wells, started hospitals and made arrangements for peace and security of the travelers. Madinah lacked a canal so he had one dug and thus removed the suffering of Madinah. He started homes for the destitute. He cared very much for redressing the public grievances and providing them relief of all kinds. During his regime the chain of conquests continued. No internal feud or rebellion worth mentioning broke out. The series of victories reminded the people of the days of Umar bin Khatab (رضي الله عنه). Waleed fixed the allowance for the poor Fuqaha (plural of *faqih*: man learned in knowledge of the science of applying the system of Islamic law known as *fiqh*, and by virtue of his knowledge can give a legal judgment, *fatwa*) and Ulama (plural of Alim, a scholar, particularly in the sciences of Islam) so high that they became well off and happy. He introduced useful rules and regulations for the welfare of the people. Waleed dismissed Hisham bin Ismail Makhzumi and appointed Umar bin Abdul Aziz the

Governor of Madinah. Immediately after taking office, Umar bin Abdul Aziz selected ten scholars from among the *fuqaha* of Madinah. He began to execute the duties of governor in accordance with the counsel and advice of the consultative body he formed known as the *Majlis as-Shoora* consisting of the ten selected scholars. By allowing the members of the *Majlis as-Shoora* to share in the government he set such an excellent example for the other government officials that the people of Madinah wrote letters of thanks and blessing to Waleed for appointing Umar bin Abdul Aziz as Governor.

It was after Waleed bin Abdul Malik's succession to the throne that Hajjaj accused Yazid bin Muhallab and his brothers of embezzling. In 87 A.H., Maslama bin Abdul Malik attacked the Roman lands via Masisa and captured the forts of Laulaq, Akhram, Bules and Qamiqam. In 88 A.H., Jarsumah and Tawanah were conquered. In 89 A.H., Maslama bin Abdul Malik and Abbas bin Waleed invaded Roman territory. A massive Roman army faced them but the Muslims defeated it on all fronts and forced them to retreat. The Muslims conquered the forts of Soriya, Ardoliya, Omuriya, Harqula, and Qamruliya. That same year Maslama bin Abdul Malik invaded the Turks near Azerbaijan and conquered many forts and cities. In the same year the islands of Mayorca and Minorca in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Spain were also taken into possession. In 90 A.H., Abbas bin Waleed captured five strong forts in the territories of Soriya.

In 91 A.H., Waleed dismissed his uncle Mohammed bin Marwan from the governorship of Jazirah (Island: The region lies between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers and is bounded on the south by a line running between Takrit and Anbar. It is the northern reaches of Mesopotamia, now making up part of northern Iraq and extending into eastern Turkey and extreme northeastern Syria) and Armenia and deputed his own brother Maslama bin Abdul Malik instead. The Muslims declared a *Jihad* on the Turks through Azerbaijan and continued to conquer territory up to Babol (northern Caspian Sea). That year the forts of Nasf, Kush and Shoman were conquered by the Muslims.

In 92 A.H., Maslama bin Abdul Malik conquered three forts and banished the inhabitants of Sarsina to Roman territory. That same year

Debal was conquered in Sindh. The same year also saw the conquest of Karkh, Barham, Baja, Baiza, Khawarzim and Sabad.

In 93 A.H., Maslama bin Abdul Malik and Waleed's sons, Abbas and Marwan, invaded the Roman territory and captured the forts of Sabitala, Hanjara, Masha, Hisnul Hadeed, Ghazala, and Maltia.

In 94 A.H., Abbas bin Waleed and Abdul Aziz bin Waleed conquered Antakia and Ghazala respectively, that same year Waleed bin Hisham Moiti Murooj al-Hamam and Yazid bin Abi Kabsha continued conquering Soriya respectively. That very year Kabul, Farghana Shash, and Sindh were conquered.

In 95 A.H., when the inhabitants of Heraqla found the Islamic forces busy on other fronts they rebelled, Abbas bin Waleed conquered it again. That same year, Mauqan Madinatul Bab were conquered.

In 96 A.H., Tus (ancient city that is an offshoot of Meshed in Eastern Iran) and the adjoining territories were conquered. If all the battles and wars that were fought in Waleed bin Abdul Malik's times are recorded in detail several volumes of this concise book would not suffice to cover Waleed's regime alone. Therefore, keeping brevity in view, the feats of a few famous and victorious generals of Waleed's times are recorded as a reference so that the readers of this book may feel ease in taking stock of the condition of Waleed bin Abdul Malik's regime and that of the Islamic world. Maslama bin Abdul Malik is one of the victorious generals of Waleed's times whose conquests have found mention above. Now read the conditions and circumstances of some of the other generals.

### **Qutaiba bin Muslim Bahli**

Hajjaj deputed Qutaiba bin Muslim Bahli as the governor of Khorasan in 86 A.H. Qutaiba arrived in Merv and appointed Ayas bin Abdullah bin Amr the officer of defense and chief of police. He entrusted the management of finance to Uthman bin Sad. Taking a large army, he set out towards Talaqan. There the Turkish King of Safad paid a visit to him and agreed to conform and pay the required taxes and at the end of the meeting the king induced him to launch an attack on Akhroon and Shoman which were part of the land of Tagharistan.

When Qutaiba reached Akhroon and Shoman, their kings agreed to obey and pay him the taxes and made peace with him. He sent his brothers Saleh to Farghana and he returned to Merv. Saleh conquered Kashana Darasht and Akhshakeet in the land of Farghana. In 87 A.H., Qutaiba invaded Bukhara. The Turks in the area put up a defense of the territory but in vain. The Islamic forces collected a large amount of spoils of war. In 88 A.H., the inhabitants of Safad and Farghana revolted and making the Chinese king's sister's son their leader had gathered a huge army of two hundred thousand and came to face Qutaiba. He fought and defeated them and returned to Merv. In 89 A.H., the chiefs of Bukhara Kush, Nasf and Safad jointly rebelled. They were also defeated unconditionally and compelled to surrender.

In 90 A.H. Durdan, the king of Bukhara and the king of Safad and the Turkish chiefs of the surrounding territories were prepared to rebel but Nizak Turkhan, the prince of Badghais remained loyal to the Muslims. Qutaiba, taking Turkhan with him, moved towards Bukhara, the Turks fought bravely. They at first vanquished the local vanguard but when the Islamic forces steadied and attacked, they captured the Turkish positions. The Turk's leader and his son were wounded and escaped and the Muslims scored a major victory. Tarkhoon, the king of Safad agreed to pay the Jizya annually and Qutaiba returned to Merv. (Jizya: A tax paid by non-Muslims living under an Islamic Government. Since the non-Muslims are exempt from military service and taxes imposed on Muslims, they must pay this tax to compensate. It guarantees them security and protection. If the State cannot protect those who paid jizya, then the amount they paid is returned to them.) As soon as he returned to Merv, Nizak arrived in Tukharistan (now part of northern Afghanistan) and revolted. Then Asbahand, the king of Balkh, Bazan the king of Mardarood, the Prince of Talqan, Fayarab, the Prince of Jurjan and the king of Kabul jointly hatched a conspiracy and expelled Qutaiba's Governor. Qutaiba sent his brother Abdur Rahman bin Muslim with an army of twelve thousand with the instructions to encamp at Yardqan. With the end of winter, Qutaiba sent some armies to Nishapur (modern: Neyshabur, 50 kilometers west of Meshed) and led a multi pronged attack against the rebels. As a result, they were punished in proportion to their crime and all of them agreed to remain loyal and

pay the Jizya. In this campaign, the fort of Samangan was captured and annexed to the Islamic territory. Nizak was caught and killed.

The king of Jurjan was pardoned and allowed to remain king in his own country. In brief, the Turkish chiefs rebelled repeatedly and they were defeated each time by Qutaiba until the idea of rebellion left their minds. In 92 A.H. Ratbeel, who has been mentioned in the previous pages, intended to revolt but when Qutaiba arrived in his territory with his army Ratbeel begged for forgiveness and paid the Jizya. In 93 A.H., Qutaiba won the land of Khwarizm, took a promise from its king to pay the legitimate taxes and then returned the country to him. When Qutaiba was capturing Khwarizm, the natives of Safad saw that the former was at a great distance from them expelled Qutaiba's governor and rebelled against him. Qutaiba sent the booty from Khwarizm to Madinah, and he himself with an army rushed towards Safad with terrific speed.

Having heard Qutaiba's arrival the inhabitants of Safad requested the Chinese emperor to help them and he sent his veteran generals and princes for their defense. The Turks prepared to defend the fort of Samarkand. Qutaiba came and began to the fight. Several bloody battles were fought. The son of the Chinese emperor was killed. The fort was brought under Muslim control by virtue of their strength and thousands of Turks were put to death. Heavy taxes were imposed on them and the leaders of the revolt who were arrested were sent to Hajjaj. Among the captives was a woman who was a descendent of Yazdegerd (who was the child ruler of Persia at the time of its fall to the Muslims). He sent the woman to Waleed bin Abdul Malik who married her. She gave birth to his son Yazid. After coming back to Merv, Qutaiba appointed Mughira bin Abdullah the Governor of Nishapur. In 94 A.H., the inhabitants of Shash seem to be ready to revolt, Qutaiba asked the rules of Bukhara Kush, Nasf and Khwarizm for help. All responded and an army of ten thousand soldiers was collected. Qutaiba encamped at Khajand and sent the army to Shash led by the leaders of the above-mentioned forces. Shash was conquered and Qutaiba returned to Merv while he was returning he was informed of Hajjaj's death. At that time, the Muslims occupied all the territories up to Kashgar and had established Islamic rule firmly over all of

Turkistan. He sent a delegation to the Chinese emperor under the leadership of Habira bin Mashmarj Kilabi with the message, "Accept Islamic rule or the horses of the Islamic warriors will run over China".

### **Mohammad bin Qasim**

During the time when the Muslims marched victoriously out of Arabia, the Sindh was ruled over by a Buddhist king. When the Iranian empire was shattered to pieces at the hands of the Muslims, many Iranian chiefs fled to the Sindh, Turkistan and China and were engaged in preparing for war against the Muslims. Some others embraced Islam and began to lead happy lives in their countries. It was by sheer chance that when the Sectional and family rivalries between Banu Hashim and Banu Umayyah increased, the Iranians were also reminded of their own age-old national rivalry and they began to take part in the conspiracies hatched by Abdullah bin Saba and other hypocrites. These conspiracies and the civil wars among the Muslims breathed new life into the plans of those Iranians who were in exile in Sindh, Kabul, China, and Tibet and among those who were engaged in preparing to fight the Islamic forces. This is one of the reasons that the Muslims had to face hardships repeatedly in Kufa, Basra, Iran and Khorasan.

Because Sindh was nearer to Basra and Kufa and it touched the Iranian border, the refuge of choice for many of the subversive Iranians was the Sindh. The king of Sindh seeing the flood of Islamic victories was very unhappy and employed all possible strategies to help the Iranians re-establish their ancient kingdom. The last king of Iran collected several armies and fought with the Muslims a number of times after the battle of Nahavand (the decisive battle that marked the conquest of Iran). In all those battles, the army of Sindh always allied themselves with the king of Iran. When the Iranian emperor was killed, the king of Sindh annexed the bordering provinces of Iranian and the vanquished Iranians surrendered Kerman and Baluchistan to him willingly so that they might not be occupied by the Muslims and they might continue to enjoy the privilege of the support of the king of Sindh.

All these considerations made it imperative for the Muslims to launch

an attack on the king of Sindh and to force him to cut off aid to the Iranian subversives. However, before the Muslims could occupy Iran and Khorasan completely during the caliphate of Uthman bin Affan (رضي الله عنه), the internal feuds in the heartlands of the Islamic territories broke out and no attention was paid to the Sindh, or to any other critical military site. Amir Muawiya (رضي الله عنه) after freeing himself from internal disruptions, turned his attention to the foreign lands and it was during his regime that the first efforts were made to regain the Iranian territory annexed by the king of Sindh. In that connection, a few skirmishes took place with his army but then the internecine wars re-started during Yazid's regime and consequently the Muslims did not fulfill their military priorities abroad.

During Abdul Malik's regime, the Muslims again did not have an opportunity to pay attention to foreign campaigns. Hajjaj who was the governor of the eastern countries considered it more strategic to contain Ratbeel the Governor of Afghanistan and Badakhshan than to attack the Sindh simply because Ratbeel was the greater danger to the Islamic province of Khorasan. Therefore, his attention remained centered on Ratbeel. Hajjaj's Governor Qutaiba achieved continued success in disciplining the rebels in the territories extending all the way to China. Sindh was the only country where the Muslims still had a security situation that was pending. However, before the Muslims could take an initiative on this important work, the king of Sindh himself challenged them virtually inviting an invasion of his country.

The following are the details of the king of Sindh's fateful error. It is said that a few Muslims traders died in Sri Lanka in the course of their business expedition. The Sri Lankan king decided to use the presence of the orphans and the widows of these traders on the island to attract the kindness and the attention of Hajjaj bin Yusuf and Caliph Waleed bin Abdul Malik to himself. The Sri Lankan king had heard the legendary news of Muslim victories. He was overawed by their successes and had been in search of an opportunity and a way to express and pay his respect to the new and dominant nation in the region. He therefore sent the orphans and the widows on his own ship with an escort of some of his most trusted men to Hajjaj. Many invaluable gifts to Hajjaj and the Caliph Waleed also were sent



accompanying them with the hope that the orphans and the widows would appreciate his good and kind gesture and applaud him before Hajjaj. The boats left Lanka and sailed towards the Arabian Gulf along the coast. They intended to land in the Gulf and travel to Kufa in order to return the families of the traders and present the gifts to Hajjaj. A storm overtook them on the way and they were forced to take shelter in the port of Debal. There the soldiers of Dahir, the king of Sindh, looted the boats and made the passengers their captives. When Hajjaj was informed, he wrote to the king that those boats were on the way to him and so he should punish the looters suitably and send him the passengers along with all the goods that were confiscated. The King gave a very proud and impertinent reply. Hajjaj immediately sent Abdullah Aslami along with six thousand soldiers to Sindh. Abdullah was killed while fighting the king of Sindh and the expedition met with failure. Next, Hajjaj sent another commander named Budail. He also went there along with six thousand soldiers and he was martyred while fighting against the king.

Hajjaj was distressed to hear this news. He then sent Mohanunad bin Qasim his nephew and son-in-law, a youth only 17 years old, along with six thousand Syrian troops. This time he chose Syrian troops to accompany Mohammed bin Qasim because Hajjaj suspected that the Iraqi and the Iranian soldiers were in league with the Sindhis. Mohammed bin Qasim first captured the province of Makran (coastal area that is part of modern Iran and Pakistan), which was under the occupation of the Sindhis. Then he came to Debal and conquered it and next moved towards Niroon and Brahminabad. Not only Iranian subversives but also many Arabs who had rebelled against the caliph had fled and taken refuge with King Dahir in Sindh. This was another reason why the invasion of the Sindh was inevitable. King Dahir fought against the Muslim forces but was killed. Then Mohammed bin Qasim started conquering the cities of Sindh one after another until all of Sindh and Multan came under his occupation.

During the conquest of Sindh, Hajjaj kept his attention concentrated on Mohammed bin Qasim. He sent for news and gave instructions daily. Mohammed bin Qasim proved himself to be an extremely benevolent and merciful victor who was concerned about the general



welfare of the people. The equality, humility and generosity that this young victor displayed are rarely found anywhere in the annals of world history. He had completed the conquest of Multan when he received the news of Hajjaj's death but he continued his series of conquests and by 96 A.H., he had brought all of Western India from Surat to Kashmir under his control.

### **Hajjaj bin Yusuf Thaqfi**

Hajjaj has continually been mentioned throughout the previous pages. Immediately after Waleed bin Abdul Malik's succession to the throne, Hajjaj removed Yazid bin Muhallab and Habib bin Muhallab from the Governorship of Khorasan and Kerman respectively and put them into prison he also imprisoned their sons too. Yazid along with his brothers fled from the jail and went to Waleed bin Abdul Malik's brother Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik in Palestine where he was the administrator. Hajjaj wrote a letter to Waleed complaining against Yazid bin Muhallab but on the recommendation of Sulaiman, Waleed did not punish Yazid bin Muhallab or his brothers. Hajjaj's hard temperament had harassed the Iraqis to the extent that many of them, after getting tired of him, fled from Iraq and settled in Makkah and Madinah where Umar bin Abdul Aziz was the Governor. He treated them kindly. In 93 A.H., Umar bin Abdul Aziz wrote a letter to Waleed complaining about Hajjaj and that he had put Iraq through a long period of persecution. He also complained that Hajjaj had also crossed the limits by perpetrating atrocities against the people of Iraq. When Hajjaj came to know of these complaints he sent a letter to Waleed making a counter complaint against Umar bin Abdul Aziz saying that most of the trouble makers and hypocrites wanted in Iraq go to Umar bin Abdul Aziz and he creates hurdles in their arrest. This will prove very harmful for running of our administration. It is only proper that you should remove him from the Governorship of the Hijaz." Waleed removed Umar bin Abdul Aziz from the Governorship of Hijaz and appointed Khalid bin Abdullah and Uthman bin Hebban as the governors of Makkah and Madinah. Immediately after assuming power, Khalid turned all the Iraqis out of Makkah and also threatened those who had rented out their houses to them. Sayeed bin Jubair was one of those who migrated to Makkah in order to escape from Hajjaj's atrocities. Sayeed

bin Jubair's only fault was that he had supported Abdul Rahman bin Ash'ath. It was not an ordinary fault in Hajjaj's eyes. Khalid arrested him and sent him to Hajjaj who killed him.

Sayeed bin Jubair was killed for no fault of his and his was not the only case of its kind but Hajjaj put many saintly and pious people to death mercilessly.

Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik was expecting to become caliph after Waleed bin Abdul Malik because Abdul Malik made Sulaiman his heir-apparent after Waleed and took the oath from the people for it. Waleed wanted to make his own son Abdul Aziz the heir-apparent and deprive his brother Sulaiman. He had spoken about it to his deputies separately. Hajjaj and Qutaiba appreciated the idea but the others warned him saying, "There is a great danger of this action causing *fitnah* (Arabic: evil disorder) among the Muslims." That same year in 95 A.H. in the month of Shawwal and after ruling in Iraq for twenty years Hajjaj died. At the time of his death, he appointed his son Abdullah bin Hajjaj the Governor of Iraq. Waleed bin Abdul Malik retained all the Governors that had been appointed by Hajjaj in their respective posts.

### **Musa bin Nusayr**

Just as Hajjaj was the Governor of the eastern territories, similarly the Governor of the western territories during Waleed bin Abdul Malik's regime was Musa bin Nusayr whose headquarters was Qairwan. A few persons from Spain called on the strongest and most distinguished man of North Africa and complained to him against their King Roderick's atrocities and requested him to invade Spain and like Morocco annex it to his territory.

Musa thought over their request for a few days. Then he sent a slave of his with four boats and 400 soldiers on board to the Spanish coast to get a first hand understanding of the situation. At the same time, he requested permission from the caliph Waleed to invade Spain. The caliph granted it and the 400 soldiers returned safely.

In 92 A.H., Musa gave 7000 soldiers to his liberated slave, Tariq bin Zeyad to invade Spain. At that time, Tariq was the Governor of Tangier in Morocco. He along with his men boarded their boats and

after crossing the straits of Gibraltar landed on the coast of Spain and moved north. The Spanish king Roderick along with a one hundred thousand man army arrayed themselves to fight with him. The two forces clashed on the bank of a small river near Janda Lagoon adjoining Sidonia city in Ramadan 92 A.H. (July 711 C.E.). The fight continued ferociously for eight days. At last, on the eighth day, 28 Ramadan 92 A.H., Roderick was killed by Tariq and the Christian army fled away.

That same year the king of Sindh, Dahir, was killed by Mohammad bin Qasim. After his initial victory, Tariq found it far easier to conquer the cities of Spain and marched ahead conquering city after city. When Musa bin Nusayr was informed of the major victory they had achieved, he wrote to Tariq to stop any further advance and await his arrival. However, it was very difficult for Tariq and his valiant soldiers to put a stop to their conquests. Finally, Musa along with 18,000 soldiers reached Spain in the latter part of Ramadan 93 A.H. and conquered the entire peninsula up to the Pyrenees Mountains. After taking control of the eastern part of Spain, Musa wrote to Waleed, "We have conquered the whole of Spain. Now allow me to go to Constantinople via Europe while conquering the European lands from Spain to Constantinople and I will visit you after the conquest of Constantinople"

However, Waleed bin Abdul Malik wrote to Musa to come to him along with Tariq via Africa after making some one Governor in Spain. Had Musa been permitted to go ahead it was not difficult at that time for him to conquer the whole of Southern Europe.

Anyway, Musa, in compliance with the Caliph's order, deputed his son Abdul Aziz as the Governor in Spain, entrusted Morocco to his second son Abdul Malik and made his third son Abdullah his deputy in Qairwan, which was the headquarters of North Africa. After making the proper arrangements, he left for Damascus. On the day he arrived in Damascus, the caliph Waleed died.

## **Death of Waleed bin Abdul Malik**

Waleed wanted to prevent his brother from succeeding to the throne and tried to replace him by his own son but in vain. Had he lived a few days more he would have probably succeeded. Due to these efforts by Waleed to take the caliphate from his brother, Sulaiman

became hostile to the leaders who had supported Waleed and also to those whom Waleed loved. The results of this hostility proved extremely disastrous for the future of the Islamic world. Waleed after ruling as Caliph for nine years and eight months died at Dairmaran in Syria on 25 Jamad ath-Thani 96 A.H. (25 February 815 CE) leaving behind nineteen sons. During his caliphate, Sindh, Turkistan, Bukhara, Samarkand, most of the cities and forts of Spain and Asia Minor and several islands were annexed to the Islamic territory. His caliphate marked an epoch of internal peace, comfort and prosperity for the Muslims with a vast expansion of territory. With the exception of Umar bin Khatab's caliphate, none of the previous caliphates experienced such a great age of major and significant conquests. When Waleed died, his brother Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik was at Ramla, in Palestine.

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### **Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik**

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Sulaiman was younger than his brother Waleed by four years. The oath for caliph was done at his hand on Jamad ath-Thani 96 A.H. after Waleed's death. Hajjaj and Qutaiba were unanimous with Waleed in deposing Sulaiman and as Qutaiba bin Muslim supported Hajjaj and Waleed, they were the targets of his hatred. Hajjaj had died before Sulaiman came into power and Qutaiba the Governor of Khorasan was the staunchest supporter of Waleed that remained alive. Qutaiba had a feeling how he would be treated during this caliphate.

### **The Murder of Qutaiba**

When Qutaiba bin Muslim Bahli heard of Waleed's demise and Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik's succession to the throne, he assembled all the leaders and army of Khorasan and suggested that they should refuse to recognize Sulaiman's caliphate. A sizable number of soldiers in Qutaiba's army consisted mainly of the tribe of Banu Tamim. The leader of the Banu Tamim was named Waki. When Waki understood the situation, he began to take the oath on behalf of Sulaiman. Gradually the news spread among all the soldiers and all tribes rallied round Waki. Qutaiba tried his level best to make them listen to him but in vain. They actually started becoming rude to him openly. Qutaiba was joined and supported by his brother's sons and relatives, finally the

soldiers started looting and burning his things. His relatives wanted to protect his tents but they all were killed and Qutaiba falling wounded and unconscious to the ground had his head cut off at once. Eleven men including his brothers and sons were killed. From among his brothers Umar bin Muslim survived because his mother came from Banu Tamim. Waki sent Qutaiba's head and ring to Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik. Qutaiba bin Muslim was a great conqueror and a popular chief from Banu Umayyah. Such a death of such a chief was very sad indeed. He acted imprudently in opposing the caliph of the time, Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik can not be accused of Qutaiba's murder.

### **Death of Mohammed bin Qasim**

The greatest charge that can be leveled against Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik in respect to Mohammed bin Qasim is that if the caliph hated Hajjaj, he should not have extended it unnecessarily to include his relatives. It is unfortunate that Sulaiman considered Mohammed bin Qasim worthy of execution. Mohammed bin Qasim was a wise, brave, gentle and pious youth. As a young man, he excelled Rustam and Alexander in the size of his conquests of Sindh and India and proved himself superior to Nausherwan the Just in matters of imparting justice and loving the people. He had never done anything against Sulaiman, except be the relative of the hated Hajjaj.

Even after Hajjaj's death, he continued to conquer new territory. His army was fond of him and obeyed him completely and this is the greatest proof of the fact that he was a highly capable general. It is possible that if Muhammad bin Qasim, whose beginning as a youth was so magnificent, had been trained and his services utilized, he could have conquered the whole of the Asian continent up to China and Japan for Sulaiman. Overwhelmed with a deep seeded hatred of all those connected to Hajjaj and Waleed, Sulaiman sent Yazid bin Abu Kabsha as the Governor of Sindh with instructions to send Mohammed bin Qasim back as a captive. Sulaiman's order was a great discouragement and it destroyed the spirit of all the efficient and victorious commanders. No shame for a caliph or a king is greater than the fact that he, instead of honoring and rewarding his commanders for their grand and praiseworthy achievements and feats should catch and throw them into jail.

Yazid bin Abu Kasha could not have overpowered Mohammed bin Qasim in Sindh. When Muhammad bin Qasim's comrades came to know of the Caliph's order, they said to him "Don't comply with this order. We recognize you as our Amir and will take the oath at your hands for obedience. The Caliph can not reach you". It was a fact that Caliph Sulaiman would have strained all his resources to subdue him, due to his popularity, he had many resources at his disposal in Sindh and many would have rushed to his rescue. However, that pious and noble youth surrendered himself to Abu Kabsha without any hesitation saying, "I will never commit the crime of disobeying the Caliph." After arresting him, Abu Kabsha sent him to Damascus. There he was put in the jail at Wasit and Saleh bin Abdur Rahman acting for the caliph, tortured him to death.

### **The End of Musa bin Nusayr**

It has been mentioned above that Musa bin Nusayr maintained peace in the entire of North Africa and completed the conquest of Spain. His father Nusayr was Abdul Aziz bin Marwan bin Hakam's liberated slave and by virtue of that was considered to be a member of Marwan's family. The courage of this brave and resourceful general can be gauged by the fact that he was determined to conquer the whole of the European continent with only 20,000 soldiers. When he reached Damascus, Caliph Waleed, who knew his worth had just died. Sulaiman, instead of honoring and appreciating him, took him captive and levied upon him such a heavy fine that was beyond his ability to pay. In order to pay it he had to beg from other Arab leaders and this caused him to lose honor, prestige and popularity.

From among Waleed's commanders, only Maslama bin Abdul Malik remained safe from being humiliated by Sulaiman and remained at his post as usual. Maslama was Sulaiman's brother and he was not connected with the issue of succession and so the caliph did not regard him as an enemy or a threat.

### **Yazid bin Muhallab**

Mention has been made above that Hajjaj was displeased with Muhallab's sons and he had imprisoned them along with his brothers.

Yazid bin Muhallab escaped from jail and joined Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik in Palestine, who was at that time the Governor there. It has also been recorded that at the time of his death, Hajjaj had made his son Abdullah bin Hajjaj the Governor of Iraq in his place and Waleed bin Abdul Malik authorized it. Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik dismissed Hajjaj's son Abdullah as one of his first orders of business and appointed Yazid bin Muhallab. Yazid knew that if he put too much pressure on the people in collecting taxes, he would lose his reputation and if he adopted measures that were too lenient, he would lose respect in Sulaiman's eyes. He persuaded Sulaiman to appoint Saleh bin Abdur Rahman for the collection of taxes and the rest of the administrative and military affairs would be his responsibility as the Governor of Iraq.

Sulaiman did not think Yazid's request was strange because he knew that Hajjaj had accused Yazid of embezzlement of Government funds and had put him into prison. Therefore, Saleh bin Abdur Rahman was recruited as the finance officer and was sent to Iraq ahead of Yazid bin Muhallab who followed as Governor. When Yazid reached Kufa, he fell out with Saleh and his presence became a point of contention for Yazid.

During this period, news came that Qutaiba bin Muslim had been killed in Khorasan. Yazid preferred the Governorship of Khorasan because he and his father had once been Governors there. Sulaiman in accordance with Yazid's wishes gave him the certificate of Governorship for Khorasan and also left Iraq under him. Yazid recruited his deputies in Kufa, Basra and Wasit separately. He himself set out for Khorasan. Immediately after arriving there, he invaded Qahistan and then Jurjan and entered into compromise with the rebel chiefs there after collecting fines and taxes from them. The Jurjanis revolted again and Yazid attacked and killed 40,000 Turks in the battle, he laid the foundation stone of the city of Jurjan with his own hands and appointed Jahm bin Dhukhr Ju'fi as the Governor. Prior to that, Jurjan did not have a city it was a hilly region with many small villages. Yazid populated this city, which came to be known as Jurjan. He then captured Tabristan and installed a Governor there.

## **Maslama bin Abdul Malik**

In 97 A.H., Maslama bin Abdul Malik conquered Razakhia. In 98 A.H., a Roman commander named Alqaun came to Sulaiman's court and induced him to conquer Constantinople. He sent his son Dawood and brother Maslama to Constantinople with an army and Maslama as the commander. He laid a siege to the city. When the Islamic army reached the vicinity of the siege, Maslama asked each of his soldiers to take a handful of grain and deposit it near the army's headquarters. When the grain was collected near the end of the siege, it was piled so high it looked like some hills. He had houses of clay and stone built for the soldiers and ordered them to cultivate the land and the fields ripened. To meet the daily consumption of food they also raided the area for grain. The inhabitants of the city were concerned to see the siege continuing with such a firm determination and courage. When a year had passed, the Romans sent secret messages to Alqaun the Roman commander and offered him half of the territory if he could get the Muslims to raise the siege. He agreed. Then he advised Maslama, "If you set your store of grains and fields on fire, the Romans will think that now the Muslims are going to launch a final and decisive attack. Out of fear they will probably hand over the city to you and thus without loss of life it will be easily captured." Maslama believed his words and fell into his trap. Though the Romans had already sent word to Maslama to take the *jizya* at the rate of one tenth per head and raise the siege he had rejected it. If the siege had continued, there is little doubt that it would have resulted in a victorious conquest. However, Allāh had not ordained for the Muslims to capture and occupy Constantinople at this time. Maslama burned the stored grain and all the grain fields. The Romans were extremely pleased to see this foolish act and it encouraged them to fight. The Muslims soon felt the crisis of a food shortage. Then Alqaun with all his supporters deserted the Islamic forces and joined the Romans. When Maslama had left Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik he was camping at Dabiq and from there he used to send help of all kinds to him. At this juncture, the stored grains and ripened fields had been reduced to ashes and Sulaiman was not able to manage the supply of provisions due to the advent of winter and this led to starvation. They



began to starve to death because food could not be procured by raiding parties in the adjoining areas because of the severity of the winter.

When a Roman commander, named Borjohn, who was the Governor of the city of Saqalia, saw the critical condition of the Muslims he invaded them with a huge army. Maslama fought and defeated him and captured the city. At this time, news came of Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik's death.

## **Morals and Habits of Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik**

Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik was a man of eloquence. He was fond of justice and liked jihad. He had made Umar bin Abdul Aziz his advisor and minister. This is the main reason that Sulaiman cultivated good habits. During the period of Banu Umayyah a bad custom came into vogue, they offered their *salat* (obligatory prayer) in the last part of the time for the prayer. Sulaiman put an end to that harmful custom and began to do it at the beginning of the time for each prayer, which is the correct method. He hated singing and the playing of musical instruments and had it banned. He was very handsome. He was a healthy and voracious eater. Once he ate 70 pomegranates, a large amount of raisins a six month old goat and half a dozen chickens and was able to digest it all.

## **Succession**

Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik had made his son, Ayyub, his heir-apparent but when Ayyub fell ill at Abaq, he consulted Raja bin Haiwa regarding his successor. First Sulaiman mentioned his son Dawood. Raja bin Haiwa said, "He is engaged in the siege of Constantinople and is at war with the unbelievers. No news has come from there for a long period. Allāh knows better whether he is living or dead. Moreover, the distance is also long. I can not advise you to declare such a man the heir apparent." Then Sulaiman referred to his younger son. Raja bin Haiwa said that he was still of a tender age and unfit to stand the burden of the caliphate. Then Sulaiman asked him as to whom he should make his successor. Raja bin Haiwa said "As a pious, pure, noble man interested in the welfare of the Muslims, it is expected of you that you should make your cousin, Umar bin Abdul

Aziz (رحمه الله), your heir-apparent for none better than he is available. Also as your Prime Minister he has the most experience in the matter of administration". Sulaiman agreed to this saying, "I also regard him as the best man. I am afraid that my brothers, the other sons of Abdul Malik may not agree and stand against him". Raja bin Haiwa said "After making Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمه الله) the caliph, leave a will that Yazid bin Abdul Malik will succeed him". Sulaiman appreciated and accepted the idea and after writing the declaration of caliphate for Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمه الله) he sealed it. Then he put it into an envelope and sealed it too and giving it to Raja bin Haiwa he said, "Go out and showing this envelope, tell the people that the Amir al-Muminin has chosen the man who will be the next caliph and has also written a declaration that the oath should be taken in the name of the man whose name this envelope contains." When Raja bin Haiwa went out and read it to the people, they said that they would not take the oath until they knew his name. Raja bin Haiwa returned and explained to Sulaiman, he said that the city magistrate and the police should be called to take the oath from the people and cut off the heads of those who disobeyed. Hearing that all took the oath without any further hesitation.

When Raja bin Haiwa was returning to the palace after taking the oath, he came across Hisham bin Abdul Malik. He said to him "I am afraid Amir al-Muminin might have deprived me. If my fears are correct, please tell me so that I may make arrangements for myself". Raja bin Haiwa said, "The Amir Al-Muminin has given me a sealed envelope. He has kept it a guarded secret. What can I tell you?" As he continued on, he met Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمه الله). He said, "I am very afraid that Sulaiman might have written my name. If you know, please tell me so that I may try to evade this trouble and rid myself of this burden". Raja gave him the same reply, which had already given to Hisham bin Abdul Malik.

### **Death of Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik**

In 98 A.H., Sulaiman left Damascus with an intention of making jihad, he sent an army towards the front. He stayed at Dabiq and continued working on the success of the expedition. Therefore, it may be said

that he died in that state of jihad itself. He died on Friday the 10<sup>th</sup> of Safar 99 A. H. at Dabiq adjacent to Qansareen (one of the five original provinces that the conquering Arabs divided greater Syria into, now northern Syria). He was 45 years old. He ruled for two and three quarter years. During his caliphate, the Muslims gained victories and occupied many lands. Activities against the Islamic laws were stopped. Hajja's Governors were dismissed wherever they were found because they were inclined to be like Hajja and perpetrated atrocities on the people. However, it is understood that the treatment that was meted out to Mohammed bin Qasim (رحمه الله) was a gross mistake committed by Sulaiman. Among his most praiseworthy and greatest feats is the fact that he made Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمه الله) his successor. Compared to this virtuous act, all of Sulaiman's errors and mistakes may easily be pardoned and so it appears that he deserves praise.

### **Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمه الله)**

Abu Hafs, Umar bin Abdul Aziz bin Marwan bin Hakam is considered the fifth caliph among the *Khulafa ar-Rashideen* (The rightly guided caliphs). He is also known as *Khalifa as-Saleh* (the capable or authentic caliph). Most of the scholars among the Muslims say that the *Khulafa ar-Rashideen* are five: Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه), Umar (رضي الله عنه), Uthman (رضي الله عنه), Ali (رضي الله عنه) and Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمه الله). Umar bin Abdul Aziz's father Abdul Aziz bin Marwan was the Governor of Egypt. Umar bin Abdul Aziz was born in 62 A.H. His mother was Umar bin Khatab's grand daughter that is, Asim bin Umar bin Khatab's daughter. His father was supposed to succeed Abdul Malik bin Marwan as caliph but he died in Abdul Malik's lifetime and so he did not become the caliph. Umar bin Abdul Aziz had a scar on his face because a horse had kicked him while he was a child. Umar bin Khatab (رضي الله عنه) used to say "There will come a descendent of mine with a scar on his face. He will fill the earth with justice and righteousness." That was why when the horse kicked him and he began to bleed, his father continued to mop his face and say, "If you are the one spoken about with the scar, you are fortunate." Ibn Sad says that Umar bin Khatab used to say "I wish that I might have found the times of my scarred son who would fill the world with

justice and righteousness after being full of tyranny". There was a scar on the face of another grandson, Belal bin Abdullah bin Umar, so it was thought that it might apply to him. However, when Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) became caliph, everyone came to know that Umar bin Khatab meant him. Prior to it, some people used to say that the world will not come to an end so long as Umar's ideal caliph had not become the ruler.

Umar bin Abdul Aziz's father sent him to Madinah when he was a child. He was trained there. His life was spent in the company of the learned legal scholars of Madinah. It was from them that he learned theology. He enjoyed such a high status in knowledge and virtue that had he not been the caliph he would have been counted among the religious scholars and been recognized as a great imam. His father had sent him to Obaidullah bin Abdullah in Madinah and it was under his tutelage that he was trained. Zaid bin Aslam has narrated on the authority of Anas (رضی اللہ عنہ) "After the Prophet (ﷺ) we have never performed our *Salat* (obligatory prayers) in a way that resembled the Prophet's *Salat* except the *Salat* we made behind Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ). Zaid says, "He used to do *ruku* (bowing) and *sijda* (prostration) fully but did not make delay in *qiyam* (standing) and *qaood* (sitting). Someone asked Muhammad bin Ali bin Husain about Umar bin Abdul Aziz. He said "He is *najib* (highborn) among Banu Umayyah and will rise as a single nation on the Day of Judgment"

Before becoming caliph Umar bin Abdul Aziz wore showy and costly clothes. However, after becoming caliph he adopted the life style of a poor in his food and clothing. Maimoon bin Mehran says that many well known scholars used to live in his company as students. Mujahid says "We went to Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) with the intention that he would learn something from us but after coming to him we had much to learn from him".

When his father Abdul Aziz bin Marwan died, he was present in Madinah. At the news of his death, Abdul Malik bin Marwan called him to Damascus and married his daughter Fatima to him. When Waleed became caliph after Abdul Malik's death, he placed him as the Governor of Madinah. He therefore remained in power from 86 A.H. to 93 A.H. He performed Hajj several times as *Amir al-Hajj* (leader of

the pilgrimage). During the period of his governorship of Madinah, all the scholars and learned Muslims used to gather round him.

He had set up a council of legal scholars in Madinah and used to dispose of the affairs of expeditions in consultation with them. Because of Hajja's complaint, Waleed dismissed him from the governorship of Madinah and called him to live in Syria. When Waleed wanted to depose his brother Sulaiman from the succession and put his own son in his place, Hajja and Qutaiba seconded his proposal but other leaders disliked it. The first man who openly and vehemently opposed Waleed was Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رضي الله عنه). Because of this, Waleed threw him into prison. He remained there for three years and was released on some one's recommendation. Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik was highly obliged to him for his sacrifice. That is why when Sulaiman became Caliph, he selected him as his Prime Minister and left in his will for him to be caliph after his death.

## Caliphate

When Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik passed away, Raja bin Haiwa went to the mosque at Dabiq. He gathered all of the Banu Umayyah and all who were related to the army and who were then present. He had the sealed decree of the heir apparent in his hands. He informed them of the Caliph's death and took the oath on the sealed decree again. Then he opened it and read it to them. Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik had written.

"From the slave of Allāh, Amīr Al-Muminīn, Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik, to Umar bin Abdul Aziz. I hereby nominate you after me and then Yazid bin Abdul Malik after you, to be the heir apparent. The people should listen and obey and fear Allāh and avoid creating dissension among themselves so that others may not feel tempted to overpower you.

Having heard the royal letter, Hisham bin Abdul Malik said that he would not take the oath with Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رضي الله عنه). However, Raja bin Haiwa courageously and sternly answered, "I shall cut off your head". Hisham became silent when he heard this. Abdul Malik's descendents took the will and decree as a deprivation of their privileges but the people in general liked Umar bin Abdul Aziz as

Caliph and did not want anybody else. Because Yazid bin Abdul Malik was made the heir apparent after Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) his descendents were somewhat satisfied that after Umar bin Abdul Aziz's (رحمہ اللہ) the caliphate would come into their family again. When Raja read Sulaiman's will, Umar bin Abdul Aziz was uttering *إنا لله وانا إليه راجعون*, To Allāh do we belong and to Him is our return, (Editors note: In Islam, this statement is advised to be read when a calamity befalls someone). When he heard his name he kept sitting and was virtually rooted to his place. Raja grabbed him by his hand and lifted him up and made him sit on the pulpit. He first called Hisham bin Abdul Malik to come and take the oath. He obeyed. Then others followed suit with pleasure and no one raised any objection or protest. After the taking of the oath was completed, Umar bin Abdul Aziz led the funeral prayer for Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik. When the burial services were finished, they brought a horse from the royal stable for him. He said that his personal mule was sufficient for him. So, he rode on his mule to go to his tent. They wanted to take him to the royal palace. He said "Ayyub bin Sulaiman's family members are there. As long as they are there, I shall live in my tent" After the oath of caliphate, he made a speech:

"He praised Allāh and said, O people! There is no Book after the Qur'an and there is no Prophet after Mohammed (ﷺ). I am not going to initiate anything new but I am supposed to complete (what has been left incomplete). I am not a *muftadi* (initiator) but a *muttabi* (follower) and I am by no means better than you. Yes, my load is heavier. One who runs away from a tyrannical king, can not be a tyrant himself, remember obedience to any creature against the divine commandments is not lawful.

When he was returning from the funeral of Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik, his slave said to him "You look sad". He said, "If any body has a right to be grieved today, it is me. Is it a light burden? Before I am asked to explain the written register of my actions, I will have to give the people their dues". When he finished the oath for caliphate and the funeral service and entered his house, his beard was wet with tears. His wife, becoming alarmed, asked him whether he was well. He said, "How can I be well? The burden of the entire *Ummah*

(community) has been put around my neck. I have been overburdened with the naked, the hungry, the sick, the oppressed, the travelers, the captives, the children, the old, and the poor with large families. I am weeping for the fear of being asked to render accounts and my possible failure to do so on the Day of Reckoning".

After becoming caliph, he said to his wife, Fatima bint Abdul Malik "Deposit all your jewelry in the *bait al mal* (treasury) or I shall part with you because I don't like that you, your jewelry and I should live under the same roof". His wife sent all her jewelry including an invaluable pearl, which Abdul Malik had given to his daughter, to the treasury.

When Yazid bin Abdul Malik succeeded to the caliphate following Umar bin Abdul Aziz's death, he asked Fatima bint Abdul Malik to take back her jewelry if she willed. She replied that she had deposited her jewelry in the *bait al mal* (treasury) willingly and that it was impossible for her to take them back after Umar bin Abdul Aziz.

Abdul Aziz bin Waleed was not present at the time of Sulaiman's death nor did he know anything about the oath for the caliphate of Umar bin Abdul Aziz. Upon hearing of Sulaiman's death, he decided to claim the caliphate and took an army and he went to Damascus. When he reached there and was told about Umar bin Abdul Aziz's caliphate, he came to him without any inhibition and took the oath and said that he did not know that people had taken the oath at his hand. Umar bin Abdul Aziz said "Had you been interested in taking the governance and caliphate, I would never have stood in your way or fought against you rather I would have evaded it and sat at home." Abdul Aziz bin Waleed said, "By Allāh, I don't think anybody else other than you deserves it."

Immediately after becoming caliph Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمته الله) issued instructions that from that time nobody should talk badly of Ali (رضي الله عنه). Until that time Banu Umayyah had been abusing Ali (رضي الله عنه) and in the Friday *khutba* (sermon) they never hesitated in cursing and reproaching him.

He took Hajjaj bin Yusuf Thaqfi to be a tyrant. Therefore, during Sulaiman's regime he had dismissed all the governors and associates



who toed Hajjaj's line. He regarded Yazid bin Muhallab, the Governor of Khorasan, as a bad person. He knew that he did not send the taxes to the treasury after their collection. He therefore sent for him. When he came, he invented excuses in respect of the taxes. He said to him "This is the wealth of the Muslims. How can I excuse it?". He therefore dismissed him and put him into prison in the fort of Halab and sent Jarrah bin Abdullah Hakmi as the Governor of Khorasan in his place. He recalled Maslama bin Abdul Malik and his soldiers who had been continuously busy fighting the Romans and besieging Constantinople. They were exhausted and shattered. After short time, he received a complaint against Jarrah bin Abdullah that he was sending liberated slaves on jihad without salary and collecting *khiraj* (taxes on revenue from land or the work of slaves) even from the *dhimmi*s (non Muslims who have paid the *jizya* and have the right to protection and are not expected to pay another type of tax). Upon hearing the complaint he sent him the order: "Excuse the *jizya* of those who make *Salat*" (Editors note: The *jizya* is applied to non Muslims but apparently the governor was not convinced of the sincerity of the new Muslims' Islam and therefore continued to collect the *jizya*, which is the protection tax on non Muslims that excludes other taxes and releases those who pay it from military duty. The caliph was telling the governor that the discerning point is the prayer, in other words if someone was praying like a Muslim he should be considered a Muslim and free from paying the *jizya*).

As soon the people heard this order, they began to embrace Islam in group after group. Jarrah bin Abdullah Aslami was not satisfied with the new converts sincerity. He tested them on the basis of circumcision [Editors note: The governor instead of seeing if the new Muslims made their obligatory prayer checked to see if they were circumcised. Circumcision is a very strongly recommended in Islam but is not considered absolutely necessary.] When Umar bin Abdul Aziz received this news, he wrote to Jarrah, "Allāh sent Mohammad (ﷺ) as a *da'iyi* (one who invites the people to Allāh) not as a *Khatin* (one who circumcises)". He then had him recalled to Damascus. Jarrah left Abdur Rahman bin Naim as his deputy and presented himself at the court of the Caliph. Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمته الله) said, "When did you leave Khorasan?" He said, "In the month of Ramadan" He said: "He



who calls you an oppressor is right. Why did you not stay there and wait until the end of the month of Ramadan?"

Then he appointed Abdur Rahman bin Naim as the Amir of defense and *Salat* and Abdur Rahman Qushairi as the collector of taxes.

Attacks were launched against the Muslims in Azerbaijan and they were plundered. Umar bin Abdul Aziz gave an army to Ibn Hatim Bahli and sent him there. He went and punished them suitably and restored respect for Islamic rule. It was during his regime that the Sindhis and their kings embraced Islam willingly and Islam was propagated there extensively. He sent an army with provisions and weapons to Spain. He had some victories against the Romans also.

### Causes of Banu Umayyah's Displeasure

During their caliphate and rule, Banu Umayyah had taken possession of the best of selected lands and villages beyond what they deserved. This led to the deprivation of other Muslims but as they were the rulers, no one dared raise a voice in protest. When Umar bin Abdul Aziz became caliph, he first had the jewelry of his wife, considered undeserved by him, taken out of his house and sent to the treasury. Then he gathered Banu Umayyah and said:

The Prophet (ﷺ) owned the orchard of Fadak with its income he (ﷺ) used to maintain the children of Banu Hashim and helped arrange marriages for their widows. Fatima bint Muhammad (رضي الله عنها) wanted the orchard for herself but he (ﷺ) refused to give it to her. During Abu Bakr Siddiq's and Umar bin Khatab's regime, it remained untouched. Finally, Marwan took it into his possession and from him I inherited it. However, I fail to understand how a thing, which the Prophet (ﷺ) refused to give to his daughter became lawful for me. I, therefore, want you to stand witness that I leave the orchard of Fadak intact as it was during the Prophet's times."

Then he made all his relatives and then Banu Umayyah return their properties, goods and wealth, which were under their possession illegally. Auzai relates that one day when most of the nobles and leaders of Banu Umayyah were sitting at his house, he said to them,

"You want me to make you the commanders of armies or the governors of some territories. Remember, I don't want the floor of my house made impure with your feet. Your condition is highly pitiable. I can not make you the masters of my piety and the business of the Muslims." They said "Do we not deserve any right or virtue due to your kinship?" He said, "In this matter I don't find even an iota of difference between you and any other Muslim." After the *Khilafat ar-Rashideh* (the rightly guided Caliphate) the glory of democracy had disappeared and the same type of autocracy in government was discernable that was the hallmark of the governments of Caesar and Kisra. Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) tried to restore the lost glory of Islamic democracy and similarities to the administrations of Abu Baker Siddiq (رضی اللہ عنہ) and Umar bin Khatab (رضی اللہ عنہ) began to resurface and remind the people of these great times.

As Banu Umayyah suffered heavy losses during his caliphate and the assets they occupied illegally were taken back and the high status, pomp and grandeur they enjoyed during their rule in comparison with other tribes, started changing into equality and impartiality, all of them began to consider Umar bin Abdul Aziz's caliphate to be highly detrimental to their interests. They were compelled to accept and appreciate his piety and purity of nature just as others were but Banu Umayyah regarded his presence as a deadly poison for their clan and tribe.

Once Banu Umayyah, in order to save their property, made a plan. They went to Umar bin Abdul Aziz's paternal aunt Fatima bint Marwan and requested her to recommend them to him. He respected her very much. She came and made her recommendation for Banu Umayyah. He explained to her in the same way he had told the leaders of Banu Umayyah. She felt compelled to admit "I did come to you to convince you on the insistence of your brethren. However, since you cherish such pure and noble thoughts, I don't like to say anything more." Having said that she went back and said to Banu Umayyah "You established relations with the grand daughter of Umar bin Khatab (رضی اللہ عنہ) and now his blood is present in your descendents"

## **Virtues and Habits**

Hakam bin Umar says that one day he was with Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) and the stable-keeper came and demanded the expenses for the stable. He said to him, "Take all these horses to the cities in Syria and sell them at any price and give the money in the path of Allâh. For me my mule is enough."

Zuhri says that Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) asked Salim bin Abdullah through a letter as to Umar bin Khatab's (رضی اللہ عنہ) way regarding *Sadaqa* (charity). He replied adding at the end "If you follow Umar bin Khatab (رضی اللہ عنہ) in treating people, you will get a greater status than he before Allâh." When Umar bin Abdul Aziz was made caliph and the people took the oath at his hands, he began to weep and said "I have a great fear for myself". Hammad said, "Please declare how much love you have for *dirhams* and *dinars*?" Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) said, "Not a bit". Hammad said, "Then why are you worried? Allâh will help you."

Hanifa bin Sayeed bin Aas said to Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ), "All the caliphs before you used to give us rewards. However you, after becoming caliph, put a stop to that, I have some land and if you permit, I would like to take something from it in order to maintain my family somehow." He said, "Whatever you get from hard labor, is yours". Then he further said, "Remember death often for if you are in trouble, you will get pleasure and if you are in pleasure, you will not find it lessened." Some Governor wrote to him that the forts and roads of their cities were in urgent need of repair and so would he kindly send them money for their repair. He wrote back that immediately after going through the letter they should set out to build forts of justice in their cities and purify the roads by removing oppression from them.

Ibrahim Sakuni (رضی اللہ عنہ) says that Umar bin Abdul Aziz used to say, "When I came to know that lying is a vice, I have never done so since then" Wahn bin Munabbih says that if there is a Mahdi to be born in this ummat (community), he is Umar bin Abdul Aziz.

Mohammad bin Fadala relates that Abdullah bin Umar bin Abdul

Aziz passed by an ascetic who lived on an island. The ascetic saw him and went to him though he had never gone to anyone before and began to say to him, "Do you know why I have come to you?" He replied in the negative. Then he said "Simply because you are the son of a righteous and just imam (leader)."

Malik bin Dinar (رحمہ اللہ) relates that when Umar bin Abdul Aziz became caliph, the shepherds began to ask, "Who has become the caliph? Now the wolves do not harm our goats" Musa bin Ayum says, "We used to graze our goats in Kerman. The wolves used to move along with our goats but they did not harm them. One day it so happened that a wolf took away a goat. I cried out, "The righteous caliph must have died today". When information on the matter was sought after, it transpired that on that same day Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) expired.

Waleed bin Muslim says that an inhabitant of Khorasan had a dream that someone asked him to take the oath when a scarred man of Banu Umayyah became caliph. He therefore made queries about each caliph. When Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) became caliph, he had a dream three nights in succession that the same person was telling him to go and take the oath. At that, he left Khorasan and took the oath at Umar bin Abdul Aziz's hand.

Habib bin Hind Aslami says that Sayeed bin Musayyib (رحمہ اللہ) said to him, "There are three caliphs. They are Abu Bakr (رضی اللہ عنہ), Umar (رضی اللہ عنہ) and Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ)." He said to him, "I know the former two. Who is the third?" He said, "If you remain alive you will see for yourself. If you die, he will come after you." Ibn Musayyib (رحمہ اللہ) had breathed his last before Umar bin Abdul Aziz became caliph. Malik bin Dinar (رحمہ اللہ) relates, "People used to say, 'If anyone can be said to be a *Zahid* (ascetic), he is Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ)". The world came to him and he renounced it. Yunus bin Abi Shabib says "I had seen Umar bin Abdul Aziz before he became caliph. Then the belt of his trouser was sunken into his abdomen due to his plumpness but after he became caliph he became so thin that each and every bone could be counted." Umar bin Abdul Aziz's son says, "Abu Jafar Mansoor asked me about his wealth when he died. I said four hundred dinars and had he lived a few days more, it would have come down more."

Maslama bin Abdul Malik says, "I visited Umar bin Abdul Aziz during his sickness. I saw that he was wearing a dirty shirt. I said to my sister that is, his wife, 'Why don't you wash his shirt?' She said 'He has no other shirt to change into'. His slave Abu Omayya says, "One day I said to my master's respectable wife, 'I am sick of eating lentils'. She said, 'your master eats them daily'"

One day he said to his wife, "I want to eat grapes. If you have some money, lend it to me." She said, "I don't have a single dirham. You are the Amir Al-Muminin (chief of the believers) and you haven't got enough money to purchase grapes". He said, "It is better to carry away the longing for grapes buried in my heart than eating abrasions of chains in hell tomorrow".

His wife states during his caliphate when he used to come home from outside he would go into *Sijda* (prostration) and he would fall asleep weeping. When he awoke, he would start weeping again. Waleed bin Abi Sayeb says that he had not seen a man greater in fearing Allāh than Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رضي الله عنه).

Sayeed bin Saweed says that once when Umar bin Abdul Aziz came to lead the congregational prayer on Friday, he saw his shirt had patches both in front and in the back. A man said to him, "Amir Al-Muminin, Allāh has given you everything. Why don't you get new cloths tailored?" He continued to ponder for some time with his head bent and then said, "Moderation in prosperity and forgiveness in power are great things."

One day he said, "Even if I live among you for fifty years, I cannot take the status of justice to its perfection. I want to do justice and root out the worldly temptation from your hearts. But I see that your hearts will not be able to stand it" Ibrahim bin Maisara said to Taoos "Umar bin Abdul Aziz is *Mahdi*." He replied, "He is not only *Mahdi*. He is a perfect judge too". At the time of his death, people visited him with plenty of wealth. He said to them "Take it away and use it." Then he added his own wealth to it. Juwairia says, "We went to Fatima bint Ali bin Abi Talib. She praised Umar bin Abdul Aziz very much and said, 'Had he been alive, we would not have run short of anything'."

According to Auzayi (رضي الله عنه) it was his habit that whenever he wanted

to punish anybody, he used to keep him in custody for three days as a precautionary measure so that he might not punish him in a state of anger or in haste. He said "Whenever I gave to my self anything of its choice, it willed something better." Umar bin Muhajir says that his daily wages was fixed at 2 dirhams and his lamp stand was made of three sticks with clay on them. Once he asked his slave to heat water for him. The slave went and brought it by heating it in the royal kitchen. When he came to know where it came from, he sent firewood worth a dirham to replace it. It was his custom that so long as people kept sitting by him and talking about affairs of state, he kept the lamp of the treasury burning and when they left, he put it out and lit his own lamp.<sup>1</sup>

The caliphs had a hundred sentinels and city magistrates in regular attendance of them. When he became caliph, he said to them, "For my safely destiny and death are sufficient, I don't need you. But even if any one of you wants to live with me, he would be given ten dinars a month and if he does not like it, he is at liberty to go and live with his family"

Umar bin Muhajir says that once he wanted to eat pomegranate. A relative of his sent some to him. He praised him very much and said to his slave, "Convey my greetings to the man who has sent it to me and then give them back to him and tell him that his gift reached the man concerned." The slave said to him, Amir Al-Muminin your close relative has sent it to you. What is the harm in accepting it? The Prophet (ﷺ) used to accept gifts". He said, "those were gifts for him (ﷺ) but for me it is a bribe." He did not have anyone whipped except a man who had abused Amir Muawiya (رضي الله عنه):

When he reduced the expenditure of his family, the members complained. He said, "My wealth is not sufficient to continue your previous expenditures. As for *baitul mal* (the treasury), you have as much right to it as any other Muslims has." Yahya Ghassani states that when Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمه الله) appointed him Governor of Mosul, he saw that thefts were very common there. He informed him and wanted to know whether he should pass judgment on the basis of evidence or on that of his personal opinion or intuition. He ordered that in every case taking evidence was essential. If truth did not reform

them, Allāh would never reform them. He complied with the orders and consequently Mosul turned into the cleanest and safest place.

Raja bin Haiwa says that one day when he was sitting with Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ), the lamp went out. His slave was sleeping there. He wanted to wake him up but Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) prevented him from doing so. Then the narrator wanted to light the lamp himself but he said "It is a discourtesy to give trouble to a guest." Then he himself got up, put oil into the lamp, lighted it and resumed his seat, and said "I am the same Umar bin Abdul Aziz as before, lighting the lamp did not affect my status" Ata relates that Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) used to gather legal scholars at night and discussed death and doomsday with them causing him to weep so much as if there was a dead body in front of him. Abdullah bin Ghabra says that one day Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) urged the people in his *khutba* (sermon), "O people! Reform your internal affairs and your external affairs will automatically be reformed and corrected. Act for the world hereafter and attend to this world in proportion to its need and remember that death has eaten up your ancestors".

He used to say, "Follow the pious ancestors for they were superior to you both in character and knowledge." When his son Abdul Malik died, he began to eulogize him. Maslama said, "Why do you praise him?" He said, "It should be seen whether the deceased was praise worthy in my eyes alone or in the eyes of others too, for in the eyes of a father the son is always commendable and so his act is unreliable." Osama bin Zaid's daughter visited him. He welcomed her and sat down respectfully before her. He gave her whatever she asked for.

Once his relatives said that, they would draw Amir Al-Muminin's attention to them through wit and humor. So several persons assembled and went to him. One of them said something good humouredly and the others supported him. Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رحمہ اللہ) said, "You have assembled over a very unworthy thing which will result in animosity. It is better to learn the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ and ponder over the meaning of them".

Yahya Ghassani states that he forbade the caliph Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik from killing a certain Kharij and advised him to keep him in captivity until he became penitent. Sulaiman called the Kharij and



asked him to speak what he wanted. He said, "O corrupted one and the son of corruption ask what you want to ask." Sulaiman said, "I am helpless due to Umar bin Abdul Aziz's opinion," Then he called Umar bin Abdul Aziz (عمر بن عبد العزيز) and asked him to hear what this person had said. The Kharij repeated his words. Sulaiman said, "Now tell me what do you say about this man?" Umar bin Abdul Aziz (عمر بن عبد العزيز) was silent for some time and then said "O Amir Al-Muminin, abuse him too as he has abused you." Caliph Sulaiman said, "No it is not proper." So, he ordered his execution and he was executed. When he left, he came across Khalid the city magistrate on the way. He said, "You gave sage counsel to Amir Al-Muminin that he should abuse the Kharij as he had abused him however, I was afraid that the Amir Al-Muminin would order your execution."

Umar bin Abdul Aziz (عمر بن عبد العزيز) asked whether he would have cut off his head, had he been ordered to do so. Khalid replied in the affirmative. When Umar bin Abdul Aziz (عمر بن عبد العزيز) became caliph, Khalid came and stood near him as usual. He ordered him to put his sword down and consider himself dismissed. Then he called Amr bin Mahajir Ansari, appointed him the city magistrate and said that he had often seen him reciting the Qur'an and performing his *Salat* at such a place as none could have seen him. He used to say, "He who kept away from disputes, anger and temptations, received salvation." Somebody advised him to be alert and cautious in the matter of taking food so that he would not be poisoned. He said "O Allāh! If I fear anything except the Day of Reckoning that You have promised, don't keep me safe from it." Once he said "O people! Fear Allāh and don't wander in search of livelihood. The allotted livelihood whether buried in a mountain or in the land must reach you." Azhar states that he saw him reading the Friday sermon wearing a shirt with patches.

Once he made Amr bin Qais Sakuni the commander of the army of Saifa and at the time of departure said, "Listen to the pious there and forgive the wicked. Don't start slaying them as soon as you arrive there and become notorious later on but be moderate so that they might not forget your status and keep wanting to listen to you."

Jarrah bin Abdullah, the Governor of Khorasan, wrote to him that the people there were very rough and they would not be disciplined



without the sword. He wrote back in reply that it was a lie that they could not be straightened out without the sword. Justice and giving the people their dues are things that automatically reform the people. So these two things should be propagated amongst them.

Saleh bin Jubair relates that some times he told him something and he got angry. Once it was mentioned with reference to a book that people should fear a king's displeasure and when his anger cools down, then they should go before him. After hearing that he said, "Saleh, I allow you not to apply this restraint in my respect."

Dhahbi says that during Umar bin Abdul Aziz's regime a man named Ghailan denied the destiny. He called him and urged him to be penitent. He told him that had he gone astray he would guide him then. He (رحمہ اللہ) prayed "O Allâh! If this man is truthful, it is good and chop off his hands and feet if he is a liar." Saying this he released him. Ghailan stuck to his faith and continued to propagate it and caliph Hisham bin Abdul Malik caught him and cut off his limbs and sent him to the executioner for his crime.

Once Banu Marwan gathered at Umar bin Abdul Aziz's door and said to his son, "Go and tell your father that until now all the caliph's had been endowing us with land and other rewards but you have deprived us of all these things after becoming caliph." His son conveyed the message to him. He (رحمہ اللہ) asked his son to tell them that his father said, "إني أخاف أن عصيت ربي عذاب يوم عظيم" (I fear, if I disobey my Lord, have the Penalty of a Mighty Day) [Q.6:15.]

### **Khawarij**

After reading the conditions up to this point it is clear that the mischief of the Khawarij continued unabated and at no time was it stamped out. Whenever a powerful caliph took the throne, they waited and watched silently and whenever they had an opportunity, they came out onto the field. Iraq and Khorasan had been the center of the Khawarij for all their intrigues and rebellions and it was there that their plots were hatched and reared as will be evident from the following events. Anyway the Khawarij sometimes openly and sometimes secretly remained busy with their seditious activities.

When Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رضي الله عنه) became caliph and the people knew of his nobility and piety, the Khawarij too were ashamed to see his virtue and courtesy and they decided not to undertake any revolutionary steps against the authority of such a pious caliph as Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رضي الله عنه) and better to postpone all their activities while a caliph with such angelic traits was present. Therefore, during his caliphate they did not take up arms against him.

Once they revolted in Khorasan. He wrote to the Governor there that unless they killed someone no step should be taken against them but keep him informed of all their activities. Then he (رضي الله عنه) wrote a letter to the chief of the Khawarij. I have come to know that you have stood up in support of Allāh and the Prophet (ﷺ) but in this respect we are supposed to do it more than you do. Come and discuss and debate with us. If we are justified, join us, if you are justified, we shall join you." After reading the letter, the chief of the Khawarij sent two of his most clever followers for the debate. They came and debated with Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رضي الله عنه). The Khawarij said, "Your ancestors, Banu Umayyah were unbelievers and cursing them is obligatory." Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رضي الله عنه) said, "You have never cursed even Pharaoh though he was an unbeliever. Don't take cursing to be essential. How can they be labeled as unbelievers who believed in *Tawhid* and the *Risalah* (Message) and practiced the pillars of Islam?" The result of the debate was that one of the Khawarij renounced his group and joined the general Muslim population. The rest of the Khawarij kept silent and suspended all their activities.

## Death

It has been mentioned previously that Banu Umayyah were extremely displeased with Umar bin Abdul Aziz because their lands, property and wealth which they had taken over, were confiscated and no further illegal gratifications were given by his government. Finally, their patience wore thin and they planned to murder him. Murdering him was not a tough job for he never kept bodyguards nor did he take precautions in matters of eating and drinking. The best way of removing him, they thought, was by poison; therefore, they allured his slave and made him their accomplice and he poisoned Umar bin

Abdul Aziz (رحم الله). After he was poisoned, he became aware of it. When the pain became excruciating, the people advised him to take an antidote. He said that at the time of my poisoning if some body had said that I could get well by touching the lobe of my ear, I would not have touched it."

Mujahid relates that once he (رحم الله) asked him what the people said about him (رحم الله). He replied that they believed that a spell was cast on him. He replied that he was not charmed, and that he knew at once when he was administered poison. Then he called his slave who had poisoned him. When he came, he said to him, "Alas! You have poisoned me. What tempted you to do so?" He said that he was given one thousand dinars plus a promise of liberty. He (رحم الله) asked him to bring those dinars to him. He brought them to him. He had them deposited in the *bait al mal* (treasury) at once and ordered the slave to run away, so that he might not be seen any longer.

Obaid bin Hassan (رحم الله) says that when his end came and the pain of death started, he asked the people to leave him alone and everybody went out. Maslama bin Abdul Malik and his wife Fatima bint Abdul Malik remained standing at the door. They heard him say, "*Bismillah* (In the Name of Allāh), Please come. These faces are neither of men nor jinn", and then he recited the verse:

﴿بَلِّغْ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ نَجْعَلْهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا وَالْعَاقِبَةُ  
لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

That House of the Hereafter We shall give to those who intend not high-handedness or mischief on the earth; and the End is (best) for the righteous. Q.28:83.

When no more voices were audible, they both entered and found him dead. He died on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Rajab 101A.H. at Dairsaman in Hims after remaining Caliph for two years five months and four days. When Imam Hasan Basri (رحم الله) was informed of his death, he said, "Alas! The best man in the world has died". Qatada says that Umar bin Abdul Aziz wrote a note to Yazid bin Abdul Malik that read, "In the name of Allah who is most Beneficent and most Merciful. This is from the slave of Allah Umar bin Abdul Aziz to Yazid bin Abdul Malik.

After greeting with peace, I praise Allah except Him there is no other God. I write this letter to you in a state of great torment. I know that I will be questioned about the period of my rule and the questioner is the Master of the world and the hereafter. It is not possible for me to hide any act of mine from Him. If He is pleased with me, I receive salvation otherwise I will be ruined. I ask Him to forgive me by His grace, protect me from the punishment of hell and, being pleased, give me paradise. You must fear Allah and make allowances for the people. You will also not live long in this world after I die."

### **Children and Wives**

He left three wives and eleven sons. His wife Fatima bint Abdul Malik was as gentle and pious as she was a Caliph's daughter, a Caliph's sister and a Caliph's wife. She lived a life of abstinence. His sons Ishaq, Yaqub, Musa, Abdullah, Bakr, Ibrahim were born of his wives and the rest Abdul Malik, Waleed, Asim, Yazid, Abdullah, Abdul Aziz and Rayyan were born of slavegirls. His son Abdul Malik resembled his father in many respects. He often said, "My son, Abdul Malik, inspires me with good deeds and prayers" but he died in his lifetime.

The inheritance that he left came to a sum of 21 dinars. Some of it was spent on his burial and the rest was distributed among his sons and daughters. Abdur Rahman bin Qasim bin Mohammad bin Abu Bakr says that Umar bin Abdul Aziz (رضي الله عنه) left eleven sons and Hisham also left eleven sons. Umar bin Abdul Aziz's sons received one dinar each in inheritance and Hisham bin Abdul Malik's sons inherited from their father a sum of one million dirhams each. The narrator saw one of Umar bin Abdul Aziz's sons giving away 100 horses for *jihad* and one of Hisham's sons was found taking charity from the people.

### **A Glance at Umar bin Abdul Aziz's Administration**

Umar bin Abdul Aziz's period as caliph like Abu Bakr's (رضي الله عنه) was very short. But just as Abu Bakr Siddiq's regime was very important and invaluable, similarly Umar bin Abdul Aziz's was very precious for the world of Islam. Banu Umayyah's rule had created in the people a love for worldly prosperity, ego and power, this made them

indifferent to the hereafter. Umar bin Abdul Aziz's caliphate in a very short time removed those evils and inclined them to spiritualism and righteous deeds. His greatest achievement was that he set the Islamic caliphate on the model of the rightly guided caliphs and restored the style of government of Abu Bakr Siddiq and Umar bin Khattab (رضى الله عنهما) to the world.

He hated repression and tyranny perpetrated by a Caliph. By establishing liberty and peace in the world, he wanted every individual to profit from their human rights. He did not want even an atheist to feel compelled. He even gave the Khawarij opportunities to give vent to their feelings. He wanted to see the status of the Caliph of the Muslims established but only to the extent that justice was maintained. Even if a criminal verbally abused a Caliph, the most the Caliph could do would be to retaliate in like manner, in other words his retaliation should not go beyond verbally abusing the criminal. He never wanted his subordinates to agree to his proposals without reference to Islamic law. He regarded a Caliph not as the ruler but as an affectionate father of the Muslims. In short, whatever we have seen during the regimes of Abu Bakr Siddiq (رضى الله عنه) and Umar bin Khattab (رضى الله عنهما) all the essentials were also apparent during Umar bin Abdul Aziz's administration. It can justifiably be said that with Umar bin Abdul Aziz's death, the rightly guided caliphate came to an end. During the period of his caliphate, many people embraced Islam willingly. These large numbers of converts have not been found in the time of other caliphs although only a few military expeditions were fought in his time. His authority extended from Sindh, Punjab, Bukhara, and Turkistan in the east to Morocco, Spain and France in the west. People enjoyed absolute peace everywhere although the Islamic domain was vast in size.

During his administration, new roads were made, schools and hospitals were built in every state. The world has never seen the prevalence of true justice to such a degree again. Because of the peoples' awareness of this, his death was mourned not only in the houses of the Muslims but also the Christians and Jews were found even more distressed. The Christian clergy in their monasteries and churches ruefully mourned saying that justice, the one who established it and its protector has left the world.

Umar bin Abdul Aziz put an end to the distinction of Shia, Sunni and Khawarij. Until the present, there is no one who harbors any ill feeling against him from any sect. The opportunity is there for everyone to think and reflect over the fact that whoever follows Islam most closely becomes most beloved by all. His personality was the embodiment of what Islam is, the people of all religions responded to it. The closer a ruler comes to living Islam in its reality the greater the response from his people. The life of Umar bin Abdul Aziz was an example of this.

The Europeans hold Abu Bakr, Umar bin Khattab, Umar bin Abdul Aziz, Nuruddin Zangi and Salahuddin Ayyubi in great reverence due to their nobility, wisdom and graciousness. They should also reflect on how close they followed Islam and that all their qualities were totally dependent on this single fact. They were true Muslims and they tried to follow Islam both in letter and spirit. We know that Umar bin Abdul Aziz was the ruler of the greatest empire in the world at the time and we also find him giving the Friday sermon from the pulpit wearing a patched shirt, as students of history we can be justly astonished. What kind of sense of duty and responsibility can there be in a man who had lived in great comfort and luxury but after assuming the office of caliph was reduced to skin and bones within a two and a half year period?

### **Yazid bin Abdul Malik**

Abu Khalid Yazid bin Abdul Malik bin Marwan sat on the throne as caliph in accordance with the will of his brother Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik. When he acceded to the throne, he said, "I need Allah more than Umar bin Abdul Aziz." Hence, he followed his footsteps for forty days.

When Banu Umayyah saw that even after Umar bin Abdul Aziz no solution to their problem was forthcoming, they tried to induce Yazid bin Abdul Malik to adopt a pro-Banu Umayyah policy. All such efforts proved futile before Umar bin Abdul Aziz but Yazid bin Abdul Malik was not Umar bin Abdul Aziz. After a bit of effort he was swept off his feet. The details of how it happened follow. Forty white haired bearded men came to his palace and stood witness that whatever he as caliph did, he would not be held accountable nor would he be punished in hell. The plan met with instant success. His ignorance led

him slowly and gradually to decadence until he began to drink wine and take drugs like Yazid I. He was the first caliph who openly drank wine and wasted his time in singing and playing on musical instruments. Banu Umayyah then had many opportunities for exploitation. They imposed themselves upon the caliph's court and squashed all the amendments and reforms interfering with their capturing lands and property illegally and they were worse in matters of justice. The downfall of the caliphate of Banu Umayyah started with Umar bin Abdul Aziz's death. This was the time when Banu Abbas and Hashimites had a golden chance of maneuvering against Banu Umayyah.

Mohammad bin Yusuf, Hajjaj bin Yusuf Thaqfi's brother, had during his regime, levied a new tax on the Yemenis which Umar bin Abdul Aziz during his caliphate abolished and fixed a one tenth tax and said, "Compared to the fixation of this tax I would prefer not to receive even a single dirham of tax from Yemen." When Yazid bin Abdul Malik became caliph, he wrote to the governor of Yemen that he must collect the old tax that was originally imposed by Muhammad bin Yusuf from the Yemenis however displeased they might become. Yazid's uncle Mohammad bin Marwan, the governor of Azerbaijan, died at that same time and he sent brother, Maslama bin Abdul Malik, as governor in his place.

It has been recorded earlier that Umar bin Abdul Aziz interned Yazid bin Muhallab for embezzling from the taxes of Jurjan. He remained in jail until he heard that Umar bin Abdul Aziz was poisoned by Banu Umayyah and he had very little chance of surviving. There had been an estrangement between Yazid bin Muhallab and Yazid bin Abdul Malik since the time of Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik. When Yazid bin Muhallab came to know that Umar bin Abdul Aziz's life was in mortal danger and Yazid bin Abdul Malik was to succeed him, he heavily bribed those guarding him and fled so that Yazid bin Abdul Malik would not have a chance to take revenge on him. He fled from the jail and went towards Basra. While fleeing, he sent a note to Umar bin Abdul Aziz that said, "If I had been sure you would survive, I would never have escaped from your punishment. However, fearing that Yazid bin Abdul Malik will kill me mercilessly after you, I am

fleeing from here." The note reached Umar bin Abdul Aziz when he was at the point of death. Having read the letter he said, "O Allāh! If Yazid bin Muhallab has run away to cause harm to the Muslims, punish him for he has cheated me. When Yazid bin Abdul Malik became caliph, he briefed the governor of Basra named Adi bin Artat about Yazid's flight and asked him to arrest his family. Adi arrested his sons, Mofaddal and Marwan, and threw them into prison. Meanwhile Yazid bin Muhallab arrived in Basra. The Basraites supported him and so Adi was forced to escape from Basra. Yazid bin Muhallab occupied Basra and extended his rule up to Ahwaz and founded a kingdom with a large army. He induced the Iraqis into believing that declaring a *jihad* on the Syrians was better than fighting the Turks.

[Editors note: The Turks referred to here are not the Turks of modern day Turkey but the Turkic tribes from the areas north of present day Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan until and including parts of modern day China. These Turkic tribes were not Muslim at the time, so to declare *jihad* on Syrians who were Muslims and forgo *jihad* on the Turkic tribes who were non-Muslims without very exceptional circumstances is not sanctioned by Islam.]

Imam Hasan Basri opposed it but the people, fearing that Yazid bin Muhallab would kill him, compelled him to keep quiet. Yazid led the army to Kufa. Yazid bin Abdul Malik came to know about the invasion and sent his brother Maslama Abdul Malik with an army. A bloody battle took place and both sides fought bravely and heroically. Finally, Yazid bin Muhallab and his brother Habib were killed on the battlefield and Maslama bin Abdul Malik was victorious. When the rest of the descendents of Muhallab were informed of the death of Yazid and Habib and the defeat of the army, they escaped from Basra and set out towards the east by boat. A regiment was sent after them and there was a confrontation between them at Qandabeel. The whole of Muhallab's family, except two children Abu Arba bin Muhallab and Uthman bin Mofaddal, were killed.

After the battle, Yazid bin Abdul Malik made Maslama bin Abdul Malik the governor of Iraq and then in place of the latter he fixed Amr bin Hubaira as the Administrator of Iraq. When the inhabitants of



Safad and Samarkand took arms against him, Amr bin Hubaira deputed Sayeed Harshi as the Amir of Khorasan and sent him to Khorasan with an army. He went there and punished them.

There was a rebellion in Khazar (covering the southeastern section of modern European Russia and in their early history up to the Caucasus) and Armenia. The people there took reinforcements from the people of Qabehaq and invaded the Muslims and put to death the greater part of the Islamic army. After the defeat, they went to Yazid bin Abdul Malik in Damascus. Yazid gave an army to Jarrah bin Abdullah Hakami who went there and waged a battle in which the Muslims defeated them. Jarrah continued his march onwards and captured new territories. Their leaders surrendered to him and the entire region came under the occupation of the Muslims.

Abdur Rahman bin Dhahak had been governing the Hijaz since Umar bin Abdul Aziz's time. He remained at that post for three years and at that time wanted to marry Husain bin Ali's grand daughter. He sent the message to Fatima bint Husain, the bride's mother. She refused. He then threatened that he would accuse her son of drinking wine and have him lashed. She sent a complaint to Yazid bin Abdul Malik. Yazid flew into a rage when he heard about it, and immediately wrote a letter to Abdul Wahid bin Abdullah Qasri in his own hand informing him that he appointed him the governor of Madinah and so he should go to Ibn Dhahak at once and depose him and collect forty thousand 'dinars' from him as a fine and torture him so much that his cries should be audible to him (the caliph) although he was at rest in his bed in Damascus. The envoy delivered the letter to Abdul Wahid. Abdul Wahid took charge of the governorship of Madinah and began to torture Dhahak. The people were not pleased with Dhahak and so after his dismissal satirical poems were composed about him. Abdul Wahid treated the Madinaites well. Everyone was pleased with him and Abdullah bin Umar's sons, Qasim and Salim, were advisors in all his activities. Ibn Dhahak's dismissal and Abdul Wahid's appointment took place in Shawwal 104 A.H.

As mentioned earlier, Sayeed Huraishi was the Administrator of Khorasan. After a short time, Ibn Hubaira dismissed Huraishi and put Muslim bin Sayeed bin Aslam bin Zara Kalabi in charge of Khorasan.

Ibn Hubaira continued to govern throughout Yazid bin Abdul Malik's administration.

Yazid bin Abdul Malik had made his brother Hisham bin Abdul Malik and after him his own son Waleed bin Yazid the heir-apparent. After ruling for four years and one month Yazid bin Abdul Malik died on 25 Shaban 105 A.H. at the age of 38 and then Hisham bin Abdul Malik succeeded him in keeping with Yazid's will.

### **Hisham bin Abdul Malik**

Abul Waleed Hisham bin Abdul Malik was born in 72 A.H. His mother was Aysha bint Hashim bin Ismail Makhzumi. When Yazid bin Abdul Malik died, Hisham was in Hims. A messenger went there with news of Yazid's death, his staff and ring. Hisham left Hims and came to Damascus and took the oath for his caliphate.

Following his accession Hisham bin Abdul Malik dismissed Ibn Hubaira from the governorship of Iraq and replaced him by Khalid bin Abdullah Qasri by conferring on him the certificate of governorship. It has been mentioned above that Muslim bin Sayeed was appointed the administrator of Khorasan. He invaded the Turks and remained at war with them until the end of 105 A.H. he defeated them and collected the taxes due from them.

### **Events in Khorasan**

In 106 A.H. Muslim bin Sayeed collected a large army with the purpose of *jihad* and went to Bukhara and Farghana to punish the rebels. The Chinese leader helped the Farghanaites. Many bloody battles were waged between the Chinese leader and Muslim bin Sayeed leading ultimately to the Chinese leader's defeat and the capture of many important leaders of the Turks by the Muslims. That same year the caliph in Damascus, Hisham bin Abdul Malik, wrote a letter to Khalid bin Abdullah asking him to depose Muslim bin Sayeed from the governorship of Khorasan and to send his brother Asad bin Abdullah Qasri to take his place. Khalid bin Abdullah therefore gave to his brother Asad bin Abdullah the certificate of governorship of Khorasan and sent him. Muslim bin Sayeed handed over the

governorship of Khorasan willingly. When Khalid bin Abdullah sent his brother Asad bin Abdullah as the ruler of Khorasan, he had sent Abdur Rahman bin Naim as his deputy.

Immediately after taking over the administration of Khorasan, Asad bin Abdullah launched attacks on Herat and Ghowr (modern Ghowr in west-central Afghanistan). The Muslims collected large amounts of spoils of war there. In those battles, Nasr bin Sayyar and Muslim bin Ahwar achieved renown. After a very short time Asad bin Abdullah displayed such a strong personal nature that he made the people worried and terrified. He had Nasr bin Sayyar lashed a hundred times, had Abdur Rahman's head shaved and then sent them to his brother Khalid bin Abdullah saying that they were accomplices in a conspiracy to murder him.

In the same way, he used to abuse the people of Khorasan and dealt harshly with them. When caliph Hisham was informed of it, he wrote to Khalid bin Abdullah to depose Asad bin Abdullah from the governorship of Khorasan. Then of his own accord he sent Ashras bin Abdullah Aslami as the governor of Khorasan and informed Khalid accordingly. When Ashras arrived in Khorasan, he pleased all with his kind treatment and good behavior. From there in 110 A.H. he sent Abu Saida Saleh bin Zareef and Rabi bin Imran Tamimi to Samarkand and Mawaraunnahr (between the Amu [Oxus] and Syr rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) with a view to convincing the inhabitants of the qualities of Islam and bring them on the right path by making them aware of the evils of Shirk. Rebellions were common in those territories and Islamic rule was maintained by the point of sword. Ashras prescribed the best remedy, the people were educated in Islam and then converted to it. That naturally removed the evils from their lives and then their understanding removed the danger to Islamic rule. The result of this form of invitation to Islam was that people began to enter Islam in large numbers.

When the people started embracing Islam, the revenue from Jizya that was collected from the *Dhimmis* came down.

[Editors Note: *Jizya*: A tax paid by non-Muslims living under an Islamic Government. Since the non-Muslims are exempt from military service and taxes imposed on Muslims, they must pay this tax to

compensate. It guarantees them security and protection. If the State cannot protect those who paid jizya, then the amount they paid is returned to them. *Dhimmi*: non-Muslims who have paid the jizya and have the right to protection and are not expected to pay another type of tax.]

When the *Dhimmi*s began to convert to Islam the revenue was reduced. Hasan bin Umar Taha, the Revenue Officer of Samarkand, wrote a letter of complaint to Ashras bin Abdullah Aslami, the governor of Khorasan. Ashras replied, "Most of them might have converted to Islam only for the sake of avoiding the Jizya and they may not have converted from the core of their hearts. Please see if they have been circumcised and make their *Salat* (obligatory prayer) in which case they should be excused from paying the Jizya, otherwise collect it from the rest of them despite their claim that they are Muslims." Ashras actually disapproved of this method but Khalid and Hisham desired that the converts should be dealt with strongly. On the receipt of this reply from Ashras, Hasan bin Umar Taha hesitated in its compliance simply because it was against Islamic Shariah (legal code). Ashras dismissed him and sent Hani ibn Hani in his place retaining his previous posts of the governorship and military commander of Samarkand. Hani came and began the collection campaign. Abu Saida stopped the converts from paying Jizya and forbid Hani to collect it. Hani wrote to Ashras that they had accepted Islam and had built mosques and so how could he collect Jizya from them. He received the reply that he must collect it from those who used to pay it regardless if they had embraced Islam or not.

In view of the situation, Abu Saida collected seven thousand converts and taking them encamped a few miles away from Samarkand to fight. Since he was justified, many Muslim leaders parted with the army of Samarkand and went to him in support of the converts. When Ashras realized the situation, he dismissed Hani from the governorship of Samarkand and deputed Mahshar bin Muzahim Sulami in his place. Mahshar reached Samarkand, called Abu Said and his associates on the pretext of reconciliation and imprisoned them and then sent them to Ashras. The converts selected Abu Fatima as their chief. Finally, those Muslims were exempted from paying the

Jizya, when their unity and collective power declined, they began to be dealt with harshly and humiliated in different ways. The consequences of these actions were disastrous. Those who had embraced Islam, turned apostate and rebelled and prepared to fight they requested the leader of the Chinese to help them. The Chinese emperor came with a large army and started a series of battles against the Muslims. Ashras himself came to fight and both armies fought heroically many Muslims and Turks were killed and finally, it ended in reconciliation.

At this point, let us reflect on the commonly held concept that Islam was spread by the sword. We should pause and think whether the Muslims in general used the sword for the propagation of Islam or did a few foolish rulers among them use the power of the sword to stop it from spreading.

In 111 A. H., Hisham bin Abdul Malik dismissed Ashras while he was at war with the Turks and Samarkandis and replaced him by Junaid bin Abdur Rahman bin Omar bin Harith bin Kharja bin Sanan bin Abi Harsa Murri. When Junaid arrived in the capital city of Merv, he did not find Ashras, who was in the field, but his deputy Khattab bin Mehras Sulami. He stayed there for a day and then marched to Mawaraunnahr leaving Mahshar bin Muzahim Sulami in Merv and took Khattab with him. He along with Ashras defeated the Chinese leader and the inhabitants of Bukhara and returned to Merv at the end of 111 A. H. Then he deputed Qatan bin Qutaiba bin Muslim to Bukhara, Waleed bin Qaqa Absi to Herat and Muslim bin Abdur Rahman Bahli to Balkh but after a few days, he dismissed Muslim bin Abdur Rahman and put Yahya bin Zabya in charge of Balkh.

In 112 A.H., Junaid sent Amara bin Maryam with an army of eighteen thousand fighters and Ibrahim bin Bassam with ten thousand warriors from another side to Tukharistan and its capital, Balkh (now part of northern Afghanistan) in order to discipline the rebels. He also started preparing to go there. When the Turks found out these armies were headed in their direction, they made the Chinese leader their Commander-in-chief and gathered a huge army and invaded Samarkand. At that time the governor of Samarkand was Sura bin Aljabr. He informed Junaid that The Chinese leader was marching

towards Samarkand with a large army and he should send him reinforcements at once. Mahshar bin Muzahim advised Junaid that he should march towards Samarkand with a minimum of fifty thousand soldiers because fighting the Turks would not be an easy task. Because his army was decimated and he had only a small number of soldiers left with him, so he was advised not to go to Samarkand. Junaid heaved a sigh and said, "How is it possible that my brother Sura bin Aljabr is in trouble and I should remain sitting here waiting to collect fifty thousand soldiers?" Saying this, he set out for Samarkand. When the Chinese leader and the Turks were informed that Junaid himself was on way to Samarkand, they left a small army to continue the siege of Samarkand and intercepted him on the way and they began to fight. Junaid and his handful of friends fought so bravely and heroically that the Turks were confounded. Some of the Muslims fighters were killed while the dead bodies of the Turks started to pile up.

The number of the Turkish and Chinese soldiers was very large. Keeping the mountain at his back Junaid pushed them to the rear and made the Turks retreat. Finally, at the instance of his commanders Sura bin Aljabr in Samarkand was informed, "We are fighting at a short distance from you. Gather your courage and come out of Samarkand and join us, you should advance along the canal and attack the Turks from the opposite flank." Sura bin Aljabr set out but contrary to the directions given to him he changed course with the result that he quickly became surrounded by the Turks and many of his soldiers were killed. Because of this Junaid was denied any reinforcements. Finally, the Muslims launched more fierce attacks and put the Turks and the Chinese leader to rout.

He sent a detailed report through a fast messenger to Hisham bin Abdul Malik in Damascus. The Caliph ordered the governors of Kufa and Basra each to send a force of ten thousand armed men to Junaid. He asked Junaid to continue fighting and that he was sending twenty thousand soldiers, thirty thousand spears and thirty thousand swords to reinforce him from Kufa and Basra. The message reached Junaid in Samarkand and he remained at his post.

After only a few days, he heard that the Chinese leader who had fled from Junaid was thinking of attacking Bukhara and was gathering an

army. Bukhara was governed by Qatan bin Qutaiba. Junaid was afraid that Qatan might meet the same fate that Sura had met in Samarkand so he left Uthman bin Abdullah with four hundred cavaliers and arranged all of the necessary provisions for him. Then along with his women and children and the necessary supplies, he left Samarkand and moved towards Bukhara. The confrontation between him and the Chinese leader took place at Kominia near Toweas on the first of Ramadan 112 A.H. Junaid was victorious, he found the way ahead clear and continued to Bukhara. Once again, he had to fight the Turks on the way and defeated them. Finally, he entered Bukhara and at that time the armies of Kufa and Basra also arrived there.

By constantly inflicting defeat on the Turks, he established peace in Khorasan. When he had established security in Khorasan, he married Fadila bint Yazid bin Muhallab. The Caliph, Hisham bin Abdul Malik, had a strong dislike against the Muhallab family and when he received the news of the marriage, he was displeased and dismissed Junaid from the governorship of Khorasan. He sent Asim bin Abdullah bin Yazid Hilali with the certificate of governorship of Khorasan, to replace him. While Asim was traveling to Khorasan, the condition of Junaid who suffered from dropsy worsened. The day he entered Merv, Junaid had died on the previous day. Asim upon arrival to Khorasan, dismissed all the governors appointed by Junaid and appointed his own.

### **Harith bin Shuraih**

Banu Abbas had started a series of secret maneuvers to establish their caliphate and destroy that of Banu Umayyah in 100 A.H. when Umar bin Abdul Aziz عمر بن عبد العزيز was Caliph. These conspiracies were conceived and carried out with great care and wisdom. A few particular Hadiths (statements) of the Prophet ﷺ were given much publicity and some were fabricated expediently. To some statements, a few sentences were added and all of them were designed to convince the masses that the Islamic Caliphate was destined to come to Banu Abbas very soon. Since the insurgent parties had been using Banu Hashim's claim to caliphate and the illegal capture of power of Banu Umayyah as a weapon, these factors were exaggerated and manipulated. For this

particular mission specially qualified persons were pressed into service. Banu Umayyah, in their intoxication of power never attached much importance to these ploys nor did they think it necessary to stamp them out nor did they like to involve themselves in the investigation of these types of secret intrigues.

In parallel with the Abbasids, the Fatimids and Alawiites also had been carrying on similar manipulations and conspiracies for a long time and all of these conspiracies had been nurtured in Khorasan because the atmosphere there was most suitable for them. Harith bin Shuraih, the chief of the well-known tribe of Azd in Khorasan was captivated with the ideas of the Alawiites and the Fatimids. In 116 A.H., he wore black clothes and invited people to the Qur'an and Sunnah and to pledge themselves to Imam Rada, arriving in Faryab, he started the mission.

[Editor's note: Black was the color of the Abbasids therefore it indicated opposition to the Umayyads. Invitation to the Book and Sunnah refers to the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. These are unassailably correct and all Muslims agree on them and every political activist knows the people will support such a platform. The oath of allegiance to Imam Rada however, was the political objective of Harith bin Shuraih.

Four thousand dedicated people gathered round him. He led the army towards Balkh, which at that time was ruled by Nasr bin Sayyar. He came out with ten thousand soldiers to fight but was defeated. Harith bin Shuraih captured Balkh, deputed Sulaiman bin Abdullah bin Hazim there and marched towards Jurjan. He easily occupied it and then moved towards Merv. In Merv Asim bin Abdullah wanted to persuade the people to gather and fight but Harith bin Shuraih had won them to his side through secret correspondences.

Harith had gathered sixty thousand people around him that included the well known chiefs of Azd and Tamim and the large land owners of Faryab and Taliqan. Asim bin Abdullah had made all possible preparations to repel the attack. Harith invaded Merv with great courage but just at the time the battle began four thousand people of the Azd and Tamim tribes deserted him and joined Asim's army. That



resulted in the lessening of the fighting spirit of Harith's troops but the battle continued on unabated. Harith eventually had to retreat and Asim did not pursue them. When Asim reached Rahban and encamped there, he had a cavalry of only three thousand men that remained with him. Harith then steadied himself and began to fortify and build up his captured territory and put it on a war footing.

When informed of the situation Hisham bin Abdul Malik from Damascus asked Asim to explain, the latter replied that because Khorasan's authority was directly linked to the caliph's court delay was caused in sending news and receiving reinforcements on time. It was therefore appropriate, he argued, that just as the province of Khorasan was once under Iraq; similarly it should be brought under Iraq again, so that help from both Basra and Kufa could arrive in time. Hisham appreciated the idea but dismissed him from the governorship of Khorasan and wrote to the governor of Iraq Khalid bin Abdullah Qasri to make his brother Asad bin Abdullah the governor of Khorasan.

When Asim became aware of his dismissal and of the new arrangements, he reconciled with Harith bin Shuraih and said to him, "Come and let us write a missionary letter to him and invite him to follow the Book and the Sunnah. If he refuses we will jointly try to oppose him." But the reconciliation did not last long nor did it bear fruit. Both disagreed on some point and the disagreement escalated to the extent that they began fighting against each other.

In the battle, Harith was defeated and most of his supporters were arrested and killed by Asim. Asim wanted to please Hisham bin Abdul Malik with the victory but Asad bin Abdullah had almost reached there with the certificate of governorship and as soon as he arrived, he arrested Asim.

This happened in 117 A.H., immediately after taking control of Khorasan, Asad began to take back the cities of Khorasan from Harith. He captured Balkh and then turned to Termiz (city in southern Uzbekistan). In brief, he remained at war with Harith and the Turks for two years. Harith's condition deteriorated considerably and he along with a few followers of his, continued to search for a place to take refuge. In 119 A.H., two important Chinese leaders were killed

while fighting against the Islamic army and the chain of Asad's victories crossed Turkistan and reached western China.

In Rabia al-Awwal 120 A.H., Asad died in Balkh. At the time of his death, he declared Jafar bin Hanzala Nahrwani to be his deputy who remained at this post for four months. After that in Rajab, Nasr bin Sayyar was made the governor of Khorasan. That same year, 120 A.H. the enemies of the Iraqi governor, Khalid bin Abdullah complained to Hisham bin Abdul Malik against him with the result that he was dismissed and replaced by Yusuf bin Umar Thaqfi. While Yusuf did not indulge in vices and performed the obligatory religious duties he was at the same time merciless and foolish.

When Nasr bin Sayyar took over the governmental responsibilities he first tried to stop the unjust practice of the collecting the *jizya* from the converts. He was able to put an end to it and an immediate impact was seen, Islam started spreading among the Turks very rapidly.

### **Cities of Khadar and Armenia**

Hisham bin Abdul Malik appointed Jarrah bin Abdullah Hakami the governor of Armenia. In 111 A.H. Jarrah, making *Jihad* from the side of Taflees entered Turkistan and after capturing the famous city of Baiza, he returned. In 112 A.H., the Turks arrayed their joint armies and attacked the Islamic territory. Jarrah came out to face them. Both fought at the plain of Ardabil (town in northwestern Iran, 38 miles from the Caspian Sea). The Muslims were outnumbered and Jarrah met his martyrdom fighting but not before making his brother Hajjaj bin Abdullah Hakami his deputy. Jarrah's death encouraged the Turkmen and the Turks in their intoxication of victory advanced near to Mosil.

When the news reached the capital of Damascus, Hisham bin Abdul Malik called Sayeed Huraishi and said to him, "Jarrah fled after being defeated." Sayeed said, "Jarrah feared Allāh more than running away after defeat. He could not tolerate the shame of defeat at the hands of the Turks plus flight. I think he met his martyrdom." Hisham said, "What should be done now?" Sayeed said, "Please send me there with only forty men and keep sending forty men daily, also send orders to

all the governors and administrators to extend reinforcements to me if need be."

Hisham liked the idea and Sayeed set out with forty men. They met Jarrah's defeated comrades on the way. Sayeed took them with him and wherever he passed by tribes of Muslims, he induced them to join the *Jihad*. In this way, people continued to join him everywhere. At Khalat, he fought the Turks. After a fierce battle, the Turks suffered a defeat and the Muslims captured a large amount of spoils of war. Then Sayeed encamped at Barzgha. The Turks had besieged Warsan. Sayeed informed the people of Warsan of the arrival of the Islamic forces and threatened the Turks to either lift the siege or face them.

The Turks were terrified and they raised the siege and left. Sayeed entered Warsan and then continued to advance up to Ardabil and encamped there. He was informed that an army of ten thousand Turks was encamping at a distance of eight miles from there and they had five thousand Muslim captives with them. Sayeed attacked at night, killed all ten thousand Turks and freed the Muslim captives. He set out for Bajarwan while a spy informed him that another army of Turks was encamping near by. Sayeed led a night attack there also and freed all the Muslim captives after killing all the Turks. Jarrah's sons and other members of his family were among the captives, the Turks then rallied again and prepared a large army and fought with the Muslims at Zarand. The Turks had to retreat after a fierce battle. Trying to recover some of their losses, they again prepared for a confrontation and retaliation and assembled along the side of Began River. Sayeed arrived and started the fight. Many Turks were killed and of those who escaped most were drowned in the river.

Following the victory Huraishi returned to Bajarwan and encamped there and sent the good news of his victories to Caliph Hisham with the fifth part of the spoils of war. Hisham then recalled Huraishi to Damascus and sent his own brother Maslama bin Abdul Malik with the documents of governorship to Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The Turks again rallied after Sayeed's departure. They prepared a huge army with a vast amount of weapons and provisions. Maslama was a veteran commander and a brave person. It was not out of cowardice but out of shortage of men and a good estimation of the

enemies strength that he moved the Muslims' weapons, provisions, women and children to Derbent (city in Dagestan republic in southwestern Russia) to avoid the risk of them being captured by the Turks. During his one and a half or two-year rule, he treated the Turks in Armenia kindly, which helped to discourage them from revolting against the Muslims. Following Maslama's arrival at Derbent, Marwan bin Mohammad bin Marwan who was in Maslama's army, left and went to Damascus. He complained to Hisham about Maslama stating that he dealt with the Turks in Armenia and Azerbaijan with great leniency, which encouraged them to revolt and when he was expected to fight them, he retreated and returned to Derbent. He claimed that if the caliph provided him with 120,000 warriors and sent him there, he would straighten out the problem with the Turks completely.

Hisham bin Abdul Malik agreed to his request and gave him the number of warriors he asked for and sent him to the cities of Khadar and Armenia. Meanwhile Maslama became sick and died in Derbent. When the Turks saw such a huge army with Marwan, they lost their nerve and surrendered. Marwan as he had said, completely corrected the situation and restored peace in the entire region of Armenia and Khadar. Hisham sent Marwan to Armenia in 114 A.H.

### **Caesar of Rome**

During Hisham bin Abdul Malik's regime, the Muslims defeated Caesar's army repeatedly. Summer and winter armies had been reserved in the north for launching attacks since Amir Muawiya's times. Those summer and winter armies continued to invade Constantinople and Caesar's territories and because of this constant onslaught, the Romans were overawed by the Muslims. In Hisham's time princes like Muawiya bin Hisham, Sayeed bin Hisham, Sulaiman bin Hisham, Maslama bin Abdul Malik, Marwan bin Mohammad, Abbas bin Waleed all led attacks on them. Famous commanders like Abdullah Battal and Abdul Wahab bin Bakht were known to the Romans and feared by them. The Romans suffered great losses at the hands of the Muslims and failed to achieve any major victory against them.

Abdullah bin Oqba's feats in Spain were sufficient to keep the European Christians and the Christian kings fearful at the mention of

the name of the Muslims. Peace was also restored in the Hijaz and Yemen.

### **Zaid bin Ali**

The treatment that was meted out to Husain bin Ali bin Abi Talib at Karbala and to Abdullah bin Zubair in Makkah by the government of the Banu Umayyah and after that the policy that was adopted by Hajjaj and Ibn Zeyad in the Hijaz and Iraq, all combined to terrify and silence the Arab tribes of the Hijaz and Iraq. Moreover, their acquisition and use of wealth created such a negative impression on the masses that it gave rise to ill feelings ultimately leading to the gradual disappearance of sincerity and sympathy for Banu Umayyah. Hisham's 20-year rule was outwardly an age of peace. In his time, there were no tyrants like Hajjaj and Ibn Zeyad in Iraq and the Hijaz. Banu Hashim were repeatedly reminded of their own ruin and Banu Umayyah's successes. They considered those who were not taking extraordinary advantages of the government directly to be their sympathizers. The fear and awe they had inspired also vanished. In this atmosphere, Banu Hashim made up their mind to pull down Banu Umayyah's government and establish their own. They had been watching and gaining experience. Since the administrations of Uthman bin Affan and Ali bin Abi Talib, they felt that strategy and planning was more effective than swords in changing governments. Therefore, secret planning, conspiracies and subversive activities were started on a large scale. The work was simultaneously begun by two families of Banu Hashim. The descendents of Ali bin Abi Talib and the descendents of Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib began their struggles separately. The struggles made by the Abbasids will follow later. At present mention is being made about the struggles of the Alawites or Fatimids.

It has been mentioned above that Hisham bin Abdul Malik deputed Yusuf bin Umar Thaqfi as the governor of Iraq. During his regime in 122 A.H. Zaid bin Ali bin Husain bin Ali bin Abi Talib began to take the oath from the people secretly. As the popularity of Banu Umayyah due to reasons mentioned above had declined so much, Zaid bin Ali was highly successful in the matter of taking the oath and 15,000

people took the oath at his hands in Kufa.

Imam Abu Hanifa was one of the supporters of Zaid bin Ali. [Editor's note: Imam Abu Hanifa is the founder of one of the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence that are universally accepted by Muslims.]

Those who watched and understood the past historical developments advised Zaid bin Ali not to revolt but to wait for some time, he did not act upon their counsel and he revolted in Kufa. Yusuf bin Umar Thaqfi tried his best to put it down and the parties clashed. Just as the Kufans had betrayed Husain bin Ali ؑ and Musab bin Zubair, similarly they betrayed Zaid bin Ali.

When the time for using swords and displaying valor came, they started cross arguing like students. They said to him, "First tell us what is your opinion about Abu Bakr Siddiq (رضى الله عنه) and Umar bin Khattab (رضى الله عنه)?" He said, "I never heard anyone in my family calling them bad names". They said, "The members of your family were entitled to the caliphate and they did not feel offended at the taking of the caliphate by these two (Abu Bakr and Umar رضي الله عنهم), and now Banu Umayyah instead of you has taken it, so how can you call them unjustified and fight with them?" Having said so, they annulled their oath and left. Zaid bin Ali called them Rafdees "refusers". Only 220 persons were left with him. With that handful of men, he faced several thousand fighters of Yusuf Thaqfi. He had called at the house of each one of them to remind them of their oath and solicited their support but none was forthcoming. Finally, after defeating the Governor's army several times, he received an arrow on the forehead and succumbed to the wound. Yusuf bin Umar Thaqfi had his head cut off and sent to Hisham bin Abdul Malik in Damascus. Zaid bin Ali's son Yahya bin Zaid left for Nainwa (situated on the east bank of the Tigris opposite Mosul in Iraq) after his father's death and remained in hiding there and then finding an opportunity went to Khorasan.

Zaid bin Ali's attempt ended in failure due to his haste and lack of foresight. But the Abbasids did not lag behind in taking advantage of it and they learnt the lesson of being more careful and foresighted in the matter and they were able to take a more correct estimation of the

influence of Banu Umayyah in the country. Zaid bin Ali's death did even more to induce and predispose the people to sympathize with Banu Hashim because Hisham bin Abdul Malik had Zaid bin Ali's head hung on the entry gate to Damascus. Yusuf Thaqfi in Kufa, hung up the dead bodies of Zaid bin Ali's comrades, which continued to dangle there for years making the people hate Banu Umayyah and sympathize with Banu Hashim even more.

### **The Conspiracy of the Abbasids**

The caliphs of Banu Umayyah like Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik venerated and entertained Abu Hashim Abdullah bin Mohammad bin Hanfia bin Ali bin Abi Talib. However, he too was prejudiced against Banu Umayyah because of his being a Hashimite and he wanted to ruin Banu Umayyah's rule and bring Banu Hashim into power. His efforts were confined to his followers and friends whom he confided in if he found them capable. Such people were available to him in abundance and they were found both in Iraq, Khorasan and the Hijaz.

Mohammad bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib also was busy thinking how to dethrone Banu Umayyah and establish the caliphate of Banu Abbas. During Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik's rule, Abu Hashim Abdullah bin Mohammad went to Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik in Damascus. On his return journey, he stayed with Mohammad bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas in Balqa (west-central Jordan). By chance, he fell ill and died there. On his deathbed, he asked him to try to take the Islamic caliphate. This was a form of authorization and all those people who were Abu Hashim's followers and confidants came and took the oath at Mohammad bin Ali's hands secretly. After that in 100. A.H. during Umar bin Abdul Aziz's caliphate Mohammad bin Ali Abbasi sent his agents to the Islamic countries like Iraq, Khorasan, Hijaz, Yemen, and Egypt. Though Umar bin Abdul Aziz had reduced, to a great extent, the hatred and enmity, most of the people harbored dislike in their hearts against Banu Umayyah and Mohammad bin Ali's movement remained continuously active. On his behalf, Maisarah in Iraq and Abu Mohammad Sadiq in Khorasan continued suggesting to the people the benefits of an Abbasid caliphate. Mohammad bin Ali settled on the



outskirts of Balqa and from there, he made publicity for his movement in the other Islamic countries. After a short time, he appointed 12 deputies and sent them to spread their message to all the Islamic countries and they met with success everywhere.

In 102 A.H. or according to another narration in 104 A.H. Abu Mohammad Sadiq, along with some influential persons of Khorasan who agreed with his mission, came to Mohammad bin Ali. It was during that time that Mohammad bin Ali came with his 15 day old son and said to them, "This will be your chief". (That child later came to be known as Abdullah Saffah and became the first Abbasid caliph). Then Bukair bin Mahan who was in Sindh with Junaid, visited Kufa and met Abu Mohammad Sadiq. He invited Bukair and he accepted at once. These events occurred in 105 A.H. In 107 A.H. Bukair who was the responsible officer in charge of the movement in Iraq and Khorasan, sent Abu Ikrama, Abu Mohammad Sadiq, Mohammad Khaneen, and Ammar Ebadi to Khorasan for advancing the cause of the caliphate of the Abbasids. Asad Qasri was the Governor of Khorasan at that time. He came to know by chance that some persons were asking people to support the caliphate of the Abbasids. He had all of them arrested and killed. Only Ammar managed to escape and informed Bukair. Bukair sent the details to Mohammad bin Ali who replied, "Thank Allah! Your missionary work and struggles have proved successful and fruitful. Now you should await your own death's too". In 118 A.H., Bukair made Ammar bin Zaid the chief of the supporters of Banu Abbas and sent him to Khorasan. He went there and introduced himself as Kharash. He preferred sympathy with Banu Abbas to even prayer and fasting and said to the people, "Far superior to fasting and prayer is the struggle to establish the caliphate of Banu Abbas and keep it a guarded secret and save it from exposure". Hearing about these statements Mohammad bin Ali expressed his displeasure with him. When the Governor of Khorasan, Asad Qasri, became aware of Kharash's activities, he had him arrested and killed. Mohammad bin Ali was annoyed at the weak faith of the Khorasanis. After which, an influential delegation from Khorasan came to him and begged to be excused for their weakness.

Mohammad bin Ali made one of them his deputy and sent them back to Khorasan. He gave them some wooden staffs, which symbolized



power and authority. In 124 A.H., Mohammad bin Ali died in captivity. He made his son Ibrahim his successor at the time of his death and left a will for his deputies and disciples to recognize Ibrahim bin Mohammad bin Ali as their leader and obey him. Bukair paid a visit to Ibrahim and received instructions from him, then set out to Khorasan to communicate to the people there the news of Mohammad bin Ali's death and the succession of his son as their leader. Bukair reached Khorasan and after collecting the people of the same mind, informed them of the situation and gave them instructions. The supporters of Banu Abbas brought the little cash they had and deposited it with him. Bukair went back to Imam Ibrahim with the money and in 124 A.H., Ibrahim sent Abu Muslim to Khorasan. The details about Abu Muslim and Imam Ibrahim and the future situation of the movement will be narrated later on.

The state of Hisham bin Abdul Malik's caliphate has already been narrated in brief. According to Yazid bin Abdul Malik's will, Waleed bin Yazid was the heir-apparent after Hisham. However, Hisham wanted to depose Waleed and make his own son his successor. The noblemen and leaders of the government were not willing to accept it and he did not succeed in his aim. The attempted dismissal of Waleed created enmity between Hisham and Waleed. On 6 Rabi-al-Thani 125 A.H. after running the caliphate for nineteen and a half years Hisham bin Abdul Malik died.

### **Waleed bin Yazid bin Abdul Malik**

Abul Abbas Waleed bin Yazid bin Abdul Malik bin Marwan bin Hakam was born in 90 A.H. His mother was Hajjaj bin Yusuf Thaqfi's niece and Mohammad bin Yusuf's daughter. He was quite young at the time of Yazid bin Abdul Malik's death. From the beginning of his adulthood, his conduct was not good. He was notorious for his indulgence in sin, immorality and debauchery. This was the main reason of Hisham's intention of deposing him, which was justified. However, the opposition of short sighted noblemen and leaders did not allow him to succeed in his intention and Waleed bin Yazid succeeded Hisham bin Abdul Malik. Waleed bin Yazid's regime marked the opening of the door of ruin for the caliphate of Banu Umayyah.

Immediately after accession to the throne Waleed bin Yazid began to take revenge on his opponents. Some lost their salaries, some were thrown into jail and some were killed. Sulaiman bin Hisham caught hold of his brother and had him lashed and his beard shaved off and publicly exposed. He made several of Yazid bin Hisham's and Waleed bin Abdul Malik's sons captives. In brief, with his succession the first thing he did was to turn his entire family into his enemies. Then he arrested the Governor of Madinah Hisham bin Ismail Makhzum's sons and the ex-Governor of Iraq, Khalid bin Abdullah Qasri and handed them over to Yusuf bin Umar, the Governor of Iraq, who tortured those noblemen to death.

In the first year 125 A.H., of Waleed bin Yazid's caliphate he took the oath from the people for his sons Uthman and Hakam. Though the practice of taking the oath for the heir apparent had been in practice for many years and the people had become accustomed to this form of oath, no one took the oath for those boys willingly and it left much resentment in the hearts of the people.

Waleed refused to keep his misdeeds to himself he offended the people with openly drinking and he made public his wrong beliefs and thoughts. He not only drank wine but he committed adultery. All these things discouraged the Governors of the provinces and territories very much. Whoever took the oath of obedience did it out of fear. Real support and sympathy vanished from the hearts of all.

In the very first year of his caliphate 125 A.H., he brought Khorasan under Iraq and dismissed the Governor of Khorasan Nasr bin Sayyar. Nasr received from Waleed bin Yazid as well as from Yusuf bin Umar, the Governor of Iraq, the orders of his dismissal asking him further to go to the capital, Damascus, at once and present the accounts of the province.

### **Division of Provinces During Banu Umayyah's Regime**

At this point, it is essential to understand how the caliphate of Banu Umayyah divided all the Islamic territory into administrative provinces. One Amir or deputy of the State was appointed for each province. He enjoyed absolute royal power in his province and appointed his own Governors in the states of his province. There were

large provinces like Hijaz, Iraq, Jazirah, Armenia, Syria, Egypt, North Africa, Andalusia (Spain) and Khorasan. The Hijaz included Makkah, Madinah, Taif and Yemen. Sometimes Yemen was taken from under the Hijaz's control and considered a separate province and its governor was appointed by the caliph. Syria included Jordan, Hims, Damascus and Qansareen. North Africa sometimes was included with Egypt and sometimes it was separated from Egypt and considered as an independent province and the Governor for Qairwan (North Africa) was appointed by the court of the caliph.

Similarly sometimes Spain was separated and its Governor was appointed by the Caliph himself and sometimes it was brought under the Amir of Qairwan and included in the province of North Africa. In that case, the Amir of Qairwan used to appoint the Governor in Spain by his own authority. The same was the case with Iraq and Khorasan, that is, Khorasan was sometimes segregated as a Province and its Governor or Amir was appointed by the caliph and sometimes it was annexed to the province of Iraq. In that case, the ruler of Khorasan was appointed by the Governor of Iraq. The Amirs in the provinces and governors in their states had absolute power. However, sometimes the Revenue Officers responsible for collecting the taxes were appointed by the caliph independently. Officers appointed in this way were not considered to be working under the ruler of the Province or state. However, the head of the armed forces of the Province and the one responsible for the maintenance of law and order was always the Amir of the Province or the governor of the state concerned. As in the case of the Revenue Officers sometimes, even the magistrate or head judge was sent by the caliph's court but the leader of the prayer was always the Amir or the governor. The leadership and military head were inter-related. Later on, the leadership of the prayers and governorship of the Provinces were segregated although the sermon of the Friday prayer remained the prerogative of the Amir or governor of the Province or state who was also the military Commander.

When Nasr bin Sayyar received the order of his dismissal, he first intended to obey it but then decided not to leave Khorasan and he proclaimed his independence.

In order to maintain the chain of events one incident must be mentioned here. Before Nasr had received the orders of his dismissal and when he still recognized the caliphate of Waleed bin Yazid, he received the order that he should arrest and send Yahya bin Zaid bin Ali bin Husain bin Ali bin Abi Talib to Damascus. Yahya bin Zaid was staying in Balkh following his father's death. Nasr had Yahya bin Zaid imprisoned. Waleed bin Yazid ordered that Nasr should send Yahya to him. Nasr released Yahya and ordered him to go to the Caliph in Damascus. Yahya left but turned back and returned to Khorasan. A large number of his followers rallied round him. Nasr sent an army to fight against them and Yahya was hit by an arrow in the forehead and died from the injury just like his father and all his comrades were slain. This happened at Jurjan in 125 A.H. Yahya's head was sent to Waleed and his dead body was hung on a cross, which remained there for seven years. It was Abu Muslim Khorasani who later took it down. Not only had the atrocities Waleed bin Yazid perpetrated on the people already incensed them but also his cousins whom he had tyrannized began to move against him. His cousin Yazid bin Waleed bin Abdul Malik in particular worked against him. Yazid bin Waleed was considered to be one of the very gentle and pious members of Waleed bin Yazid's dynasty. He therefore began to expose the caliph's unlawful activities and very soon, many came to agree with him. On his mission, he received the support not only of the leaders of the army and the Amirs of the Provinces but also of the family of the Caliph. The result was that all took the oath at Yazid bin Waleed's hands secretly and thus the larger part of the Syrian army joined him. He left Damascus and stayed at a village a little distance from Damascus and from there he sent his agents to all the Islamic territories to inform them of the misdeeds and sinful acts of Waleed bin Yazid and mobilize their opinion against Waleed bin Yazid and for Yazid bin Waleed. This was the first time that Banu Umayyah and the royal family were disunited and split up, the opposition grew so strong that secret conspiracies and deceit were resorted to. Consequently, the condition of Waleed's authority deteriorated and Yazid's authority was enhanced. Yazid bin Waleed's brother Abbas bin Waleed, disapproved of what Yazid was doing and wanted to stop his brother from rebelling. It was due to his opposition that compelled Yazid to leave Damascus and seek another place to live at.

Yazid was satisfied about his position in all respects and fixed Friday 27 Jamad-al-Thani 126 A.H. for the uprising. He entered Damascus after the night prayer and arrested the city magistrate and then captured the government arsenal. Waleed did not have any prior information about the rebellion and its preparations. When he realized what was transpiring he became nervous and confused and could do nothing. He sat down and closed the doors of the palace. The inhabitants and people living in the adjoining areas began to arrive and take the oath from Yazid bin Waleed openly. Waleed wanted to leave Damascus and go to Hims but Yazid besieged Waleed in the palace of Noman. Waleed's comrades fought desperately. Abbas bin Waleed, Yazid's brother, left Damascus with a group of warriors to support Waleed and oppose Yazid but Mansoor bin Jamhoor arrested him on the way and presented him before Yazid bin Waleed. When Waleed bin Yazid realized there was no way out, he said, "This is the same type of day that befell Uthman bin Affan (رضي الله عنه)" and then he sat down to read the Qur'an. Yazid's men scaled over the palace walls, entered it and cut off his head. Mansoor bin Jamhoor took it to Yazid bin Waleed. Yazid said, "Let it be displayed in public and then sent to his brother Sulaiman bin Yazid" and it was done accordingly. Waleed, after being caliph for a year and three months, was killed on 28 Jamad-al-Thani 126 A.H. and the same day Yazid bin Waleed bin Abdul Malik acceded to the throne. The suffering caused by this civil war among the Banu Umayyah continued to bring about misfortunes and ultimately lead to its extermination.

### **Yazid bin Waleed bin Abdul Malik**

Abu Khalid Yazid bin Waleed bin Abdul Malik bin Marwan bin Hakam is also known as Yazid the III and 'Yazid Naqis' (Yazid the reducer). He was called by this name because he slashed the salaries of the army. When Waleed bin Yazid had taken over as Caliph, he had increased the salaries by ten 'dirhams'. When Yazid became Caliph, he abolished the increment and restored the previous pay scale that was used by caliph Hisham. After becoming Caliph, Yazid gathered the people and said, "Waleed was a disbeliever and therefore he was assassinated. Now I shall treat you well. You will get your salaries on time. No one will be given any land until I fortify the borders of the

Islamic territories and fill the cities with justice and righteousness. I shall not keep watch at my door so that everyone may have easy access to me". After that, he took the oath for his brother Ibrahim bin Waleed and Abdul Aziz bin Hajjaj bin Abdul Malik to succeed after him.

When the inhabitants of Hims learned that Waleed bin Yazid was assassinated, they took up arms and made Yazid bin Khalid bin Yazid bin Muawiya their leader and set out for Damascus to avenge Waleed's death. Yazid bin Waleed gave an army to Sulaiman bin Hisham bin Abdul Malik for defense. He first made a proposal for reconciliation to the inhabitants of Hims and when they refused, he began to fight them. The consequence was that Yazid bin Khalid was caught and the rebels of Hims were killed in large numbers and the rest ran away from the battlefield.

When the Palestinians received the news, they also revolted. They made Yazid bin Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik their leader and when the Jordanians heard, they enthroned Mohammad bin Abdul Malik as their king and joined the Palestinians. The forces of the Palestinians and Jordanians moved jointly to Damascus. Waleed had already won the people of those places to his side but since it was an issue of the Caliph's assassination, they were enveloped by a strong wave of sympathy for the murdered Caliph and hatred against the present one. This was not surprising when we see a criminal executed although he is guilty, our previous hatred and loathing for him dissipates. The office of the caliph is a cherished one and any foul play connected to it brings a negative reaction and because of these factors the Jordanians and Palestinians revolted. Hearing about the advancing army, Yazid deputed Sulaiman bin Hisham with a large army to discipline and correct them. Sulaiman defeated them all and forced them to obey the new Caliph.

After suppressing these revolts in Syria, Yazid dismissed Yusuf bin Umar as the Amir of Iraq and Khorasan and replaced him with Mansoor bin Jamhoor. Yusuf did not officially hand over the authority to him instead he left for Damascus covertly. As soon as he arrived in Damascus, Yazid bin Waleed arrested him and he died in captivity. Mansoor reached Kufa and released all the prisoners Yusuf had jailed

and sent his own brother as the Governor of Khorasan. Nasr bin Sayyar did not allow him entry into Khorasan and before the issue was settled, Yazid bin Waleed dismissed Mansoor and replaced him by Abdullah bin Umar bin Abdul Aziz and sent him to Iraq, not even two months had elapsed between the appointment of Mansoor and his replacement by Abdullah. Mansoor officially handed over the responsibilities of Amir to Abdullah and went to Syria. Abdullah bin Umar appointed Nasr bin Sayyar governor of Khorasan. At that time, the state of Yamamah was governed along with the province of Iraq. Sometimes Yamamah was annexed to the Hijaz and at other times to Iraq. The inhabitants of Yamamah had proclaimed their independence during Yusuf bin Umar's regime by expelling Ali bin Muhajir, the Governor of Yamamah. They were still independent and nothing could be done to bring them under the central government's rule.

When Abdullah bin Umar bin Abdul Aziz took over as the Amir of Iraq and appointed Nasr bin Sayyar the Governor of Khorasan, Jadi bin Kermani Azdi revolted against him. Jadi was in fact an Azdi but because he was born in Kerman, he was known as Kermani. Because Nasr had declared his independence as ruler of Khorasan and then was appointed to the post of Governor he seemingly was rewarded for his rebellion, so Jadi felt resentment. He said to his friends, "They are falling into mischief. Choose your own leader for your work". Nasr bin Sayyar and Kermani had disagreed in the past and there was resentment still lingering between them. For starting this new problem, Nasr arrested him and put him into jail on 27 Ramadan 126 A.H. Kermani remained there for a few days and then managed to escape. He was able to immediately gathered 3000 men. Nasr appointed a military commander to humble and discipline him. However, the people intervened and stopped the fight and brought about reconciliation between them. That resulted in Kermani visiting Nasr who exhorted him to remain confined to his house. After a few days, Kermani wanted to revolt again. Several times they were ready to fight and then became reconciled. Finally, it was agreed that Kermani should leave Khorasan and go to Jurjan.

During the days when Nasr and Kermani were constantly disputing the situation turned very dangerous, Nasr had the apprehension that Kermani might call Harith bin Shurath from Turkistan and strengthen



himself. Harith bin Shuraih has already been mentioned. He had been in Turkistan for 12 or 13 years. Therefore, Nasr sent Muqatil bin Hayani Nabti to bring Harith to him. He sent letters to Abdullah bin Umar bin Abdul Aziz in Kufa and to Yazid bin Waleed in Damascus expressing his opinion of the possible danger from Harith and requested for documents of safe passage and permission to call him to Khorasan. Letters guaranteeing his security came from both the places. Harith left Turkistan and arrived in Khorasan where Nasr entertained him splendidly and lodged him at Marwrood. He fixed 50 dirhams as his daily allowance and said to him, "Choose the state and you will be made the Governor there". Harith said, "I don't want material benefits or power. I am interested in bringing into practice the Book and the Sunnah (practical application of the Quran and the methods of the Prophet ﷺ). I became sick of atrocities and I left these cities now after 13 years you have recalled me to them". Nasr was silent upon hearing this. Harith then sent word to Kermani, "If Nasr bin Sayyar is acting upon the Book and the Sunnah I shall fight against his enemies and support him and if he fails to act accordingly, I shall join you provided that you too promise to act upon the Book and Sunnah". Then Harith drew the tribe of Tamim and others to his command and within a few days, 3,000 people took the oath for his leadership.

This was the situation in Khorasan. In Armenia, Marwan bin Mohammad bin Marwan and in Jazira, Abduh bin Riyah Ghassani were the Amirs. When Waleed bin Yazid was killed, Abdu Ghassani left Jazirah (Literally: island. The region lies between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers and is bounded on the south by a line running between Takrit and Anbar. It is the northern reaches of Mesopotamia, now making up part of northern Iraq and extending into eastern Turkey and extreme northeastern Syria) and went to Syria. Marwan bin Mohammad's son, Abdul Malik, finding the province of Jazirah deserted, captured it and then sent his agents to various places and wrote to his father, Marwan bin Mohammad bin Marwan, "This is a big opportunity please stand up and avenge Waleed's death". Yazid bin Waleed had hardly become free from the uprisings in Hims, Jordan and Palestine, when he received the news of Marwan's revolt. Because the situation was highly critical for Yazid he wrote to



Marwan, "If you take the oath at my hands I shall give you the authority over all the states of Jazirah, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Mosil and send you the certificate making you the Amir". Marwan bin Mohammad took the oath from Yazid, and as promised, Yazid sent him the documents making him the Amir. Marwan then began to rule over the Provinces mentioned, previously he was the ruler of Armenia alone but now he was made the Amir of all territories up to Mosil.

Yazid bin Waleed, popularly known as Yazid Naqis (the reducer) was not bad from the view point of his morals and merits but he did not live long and after ruling for about six months, he died of plague on 20 Dhul Hijja 126 A.H. at the age of 35.

### **Ibrahim bin Waleed bin Abdul Malik**

Abu Ishaq Ibrahim bin Waleed bin Abdul Malik took over as caliph after his brother Yazid Naqis in keeping with his will. All the people did not take the oath from Ibrahim. Some continued refusing to do so. When Marwan bin Mohammad bin Marwan, the Amir of Armenia, heard of Yazid's death, he advanced towards Damascus with his army. First, he arrived at Qansareen (one of the five original provinces that the conquering Arabs divided greater Syria into, now northern Syria). After capturing it, he moved towards Hims. The situation in Hims was strange. The inhabitants of Hims had not taken the oath with Ibrahim. Because of this the Syrian army from Damascus under the command of Abdul Aziz bin Hajjaj bin Abdul Malik, the commander of Ibrahim, was besieging Hims. When Abdul Aziz heard Marwan bin Mohammad was approaching, he raised the siege and went to Damascus. When Marwan arrived in Hims, the inhabitants of Hims took the oath without any hesitation. When Ibrahim was informed of it, he sent Sulaiman bin Hisham with an army of 120,000 to fight with Marwan. Marwan had 80,000 soldiers only. Before the fight, Marwan sent the message that read, "We give up our claim to Waleed bin Yazid's blood. Simply release his sons Hakam and Uthman whom Waleed had made his heirs apparent". Sulaiman bin Hisham turned down the request and the battle began. Sulaiman suffered a crushing defeat after getting his 17,000 men killed. Marwan took the oath for Hakam and Uthman and moved towards Damascus. In

Damascus Ibrahim and his advisors agreed to murder Hakam and Uthman and that is how they did. Marwan entered Damascus as the victor and Ibrahim and Sulaiman fled from Damascus towards Tadmur (ancient Syrian city, now in south-central Syria). Marwan found the dead bodies of Hakam and Uthman and was extremely aggrieved. He performed the funeral prayer and buried them and then put the question to the people, "Whom do you want to be made your Caliph?" They all unanimously took the oath with Marwan bin Mohammad bin Marwan bin Hakam. That occurred on Monday 24 Safar 127 A.H. Marwan granted pardon to Ibrahim and the latter willingly renounced his claim to the caliphate in favor of Marwan bin Muhammad. Historians differ on Ibrahim's caliphate. Some consider him to be a caliph and some do not because his caliphate was not recognized all over the Islamic world and he also abdicated. His caliphate whatever it may be considered lasted for only two months and a few days.

### **Marwan bin Mohammad bin Marwan bin Hakam**

Marwan bin Mohammad is the last of the caliphs of the Banu Umayyah dynasty. Historically he is sometimes referred to as Marwan II. The caliph was known for his patience because the days of his caliphate were passed in waging many battles and he proved himself very forbearing and enduring. Marwan bin Mohammad lived at Harran instead of Damascus. He invited (the deposed caliph) Ibrahim from Tadmur and fixed him a salary. On 1 Shawwal Marwan received news that the inhabitants of Hims were fully prepared to take arms and that the Arab tribes from the adjoining areas had joined them. As soon as he heard the news, he took his forces and rushed towards Hims. Ibrahim and Sulaiman also accompanied him. They reached Hims on 30 Shawwal. They found the city gates closed. Marwan's officer shouted, "Why have you broken your oath with the 'Amir al-Muminin?" The city dwellers said, "We have not broken it. We are obedient and still firm on the oath". Then they opened the city gates and Marwan's men entered it. There were several factions in Hims, those opposed to him fought with Marwan and he defeated them. He pulled down about 300 yards of the city wall and leveled it to avoid another siege. He took the oath from the citizens. He was still in the

city when he received news that the citizens of Ghota had chosen Yazid bin Khalid as their leader, invaded Damascus and besieged its Governor. Marwan sent 10,000 soldiers to the help the Governor. The army arrived and the fight between them began. Marwan's army fought from outside and the people of Damascus fought from within. The Ghota people were defeated. Yazid bin Khalid was killed and his head was cut off and sent to Marwan. Immediately after the suppression of the uprising Thabit bin Naim gathered the Palestinians and laid siege to Tabria. It was then ruled over by Waleed bin Muawiya bin Marwan bin Hakam. Marwan at once sent his commander Abul Warda to put down the rebellion. Immediately after his arrival, the Taberians came out of the city and fought. The Palestinians were defeated. Abul Warda caught Thabit bin Naim's three sons and sent them to Marwan. Marwan appointed Ramahis bin Abdul Aziz Kanani as the ruler of Palestine. He searched for and arrested Thabit bin Naim and sent him to Marwan who chopped off his and his son's hands and feet and crucified them. After these events, the situation stabilized and Marwan bin Mohammad took the oath for the succession of his sons Abdullah and Obaidullah at Dair Ayyub and they married Hisham bin Abdul Malik's daughters. Then he invaded Tadmur because they were still claiming independence. They were forced to surrender and take the oath. Then he sent Yazid bin Umar bin Hubairah to Iraq to expel Dhahak Shebani Khawarji who had occupied Kufa. He stayed at Qarqisa in order to keep sending reinforcements from the rear. Before this, Sulaiman bin Hisham had encamped at RuSaffah (near present day Baghdad) to take rest. A large number of Syrians whom Marwan had sent to Iraq under the command of Yazid bin Umar bin Hubaira left him and went to Sulaiman bin Hisham and requested him to accept the caliphate. Sulaiman accepted it and taking them with him moved towards Qansareen. From there, he wrote letters to the different Syrian groups to which they responded and Syrians from all directions rallied round him and formed a big army. When Marwan heard about it, he ordered Yazid bin Umar bin Hubaira to halt and then he himself left Qarqisa and moved to face Sulaiman. Marwan and Sulaiman arrayed their forces outside of Qansareen at Hanaf and Marwan's forces defeated Sulaiman and forced him to escape. The captives from Sulaiman's men were slain. Sulaiman bin Hisham's son and Hisham bin Abdul

Malik's maternal uncle Khalid bin Hisham Makhzumi were killed on the battlefield. Sulaiman fled to Hims, gathered more armed forces and repaired the city walls. Marwan arrived at Hims and there was a fierce battle. Marwan surrounded Hims and continued the siege for about six months. Eighty catapults constantly kept launching stones. Becoming helpless, the citizens of Hims begged for pardon and Sulaiman escaped to Tadmur. Finishing the siege of Hims, Marwan set out for Kufa to fight with Dhahak Khawarji.

Yazid bin Umar bin Hubaira went to Kufa and defeated Dhahak Khawarji. Dhahak reordered his army and Yazid bin Umar defeated him again and entered Kufa. The Khawarij rebelled several times but they were defeated each time. Yazid bin Umar bin Hubaira occupied Iraq and sent Nasr bin Sayyar to Khorasan as the Governor after he took the oath for Marwan bin Mohammad.

As mentioned above, Harith bin Shuraih was present in Khorasan and the number of his men kept increasing day by day. He knew that he was granted pardon and security by Yazid bin Waleed and not by Marwan bin Mohammad. The Governor of Kufa, Abdullah bin Umar bin Abdul Aziz had also granted him pardon but not the present Governor of Kufa, Yazid bin Umar bin Hubairah. Therefore, Harith announced his opposition to them. Nasr bin Sayyar argued with him on this point very much but he did not see reason. Finally, war became inevitable. The flames of war engulfed the streets of the capital city Merv. From the other side of Khorasan, Kermani in Kerman had become very powerful. Nasr bin Sayyar sent for Kermani with grave misgivings because his doubts about his loyalty were not clarified. Kermani prepared himself for opposition to both sides. In short, the three of them, Kermani, Harith and Nasr assembled at Merv with their armies. All of them were equally powerful and all of them had different goals in their hearts. None of them had sympathy for the other. At last, Harith and Kermani joined together and defeated Nasr and expelled him from Merv. After a few days, they fought with each other, which resulted in the death of Harith and Kermani captured Merv in 128 A.H. When Harith was killed, Nasr collected Harith's soldiers and started sending armies against Kermani. Battles were waged and in almost all the confrontations, Nasr's commanders

were defeated. At last, Nasr, taking a big army, went to Merv. The two sides made fortifications and a chain of battles began. The battles continued and neither side was able to subdue the other. Abu Muslim Khorasani, who finds mention in the coming pages, found the situation advantageous and collected an army, he entered into correspondence with Nasr and Kermani separately. He wrote to Nasr, "Imam Ibrahim (the leader of the Abbasid movement) has sent me some instructions about you and I think you will be benefited by them". Then he wrote the same type of letter to Kermani, "I am your sympathizer and Imam Ibrahim has written to me to help you in your time of need". He gave instructions to the messengers bearing the letters to show the letter addressed to Nasr, to those tribes which sympathized with him, and to show the letter, addressed to Kermani to those tribes who were Kermani's sympathizers. The aim was to win the sympathy of all the tribes. Similarly, he managed to gain the sympathy and support of the Khawarij by clever means. Abu Muslim Khorasani arrived with his army and encamped in between the fortifications of Kermani and Nasr. Both sides failed to guess whom he would support or oppose. The next day Abu Muslim sent word to Kermani, "I shall fight with Nasr from your side". Kermani was highly pleased. When Nasr came to know about it he wrote to Kermani, "Abu Muslim wants to harm you cleverly. Don't come into his snare. We should forget our differences and fight against him". Kermani agreed to Nasr's suggestion. The next day a meeting between the two was arranged. Kermani came out with 200 men to meet Nasr whose men taking the opportunity killed them. Kermani's son Ali came running to Abu Muslim for support and Kermani's and Abu Muslim's armies under the command of Ali and Abu Muslim attacked Nasr. Nasr was defeated. He fled and hid himself in a house. Abu Muslim and Ali captured Merv. Ali bin Kermani wanted to take the oath at Abu Muslim's hand but the latter said, "At present maintain the status quo. We shall do whatever is proper when the Imam's order comes". Nasr escaped from Merv and began to gather forces. Abu Muslim and Ali bin Kermani lived together. Abu Muslim persuaded the chief of the Khawarij Sheban bin Abdul Aziz Khwarji to join him because Nasr was inimical to the Khawarij. Ali bin Kermani joined Abu Muslim because he wanted to avenge his father's death. Nasr

sent word to the Khawarij leader in order separate him and Abu Muslim, saying that Abu Muslim was a Shi'ite. In brief, the Khawarij split with Abu Muslim, Kermani's son also left him. All these four groups, Abu Muslim, Sheban Khawariji, Ali bin Kermani and Nasr were wandering here and there in Khorasan all looking for an opportunity against the other. Nasr and Abu Muslim were more clever and more farsighted than the others. Consequently, Abu Muslim had an opportunity and murdered Sheban Khawariji and Kermani's son one after the other in 130 A.H. In 131 A.H., Nasr fell ill and died at Rayy and that left Abu Muslim with no rivals remaining in Khorasan.

### **Khawarij**

A brief of the situation in Khorasan has been given above. We will now discuss the Khawarij factor. They observed the civil wars and weaknesses in Islamic territories and used these situations to assist them in their revolt. The Khawarij of Khorasan chose Dhahak bin Qais Shebani as their leader. Dhahak attacked Kufa and occupied it and Abdullah bin Umar bin Abdul Aziz had to retreat from Kufa and go to Wasit. Sulaiman bin Hisham, defeated by Marwan bin Mohammad, joined Dhahak bin Qais. That of course added to Dhahak's overall strength. Dhahak then invaded Mosil. There Marwan bin Mohammad's son, Abdullah bin Marwan, faced him with only 7000 soldiers while Dhahak had one hundred thousand fighters, and with this army he surrounded Abdullah bin Marwan. Marwan, Abdullah's father received this information and turned his attention to his son's predicament. After a fierce battle, Dhahak was killed and the Khawarij chose Sayeed bin Bahdal as their leader but he was also killed. Then they made Sheban bin Abdul Aziz their new leader. Marwan sent Yazid bin Hubaira towards Kufa. He went there and turned out all the Khawarij from that city. On the other side, Sheban bin Abdul Aziz, taking all the Khawarij with him, went towards Iran. There he joined Abu Muslim as has been mentioned above and was killed in 130 A.H. The Hijaz, Yemen and Hadramawt (ancient South Arabian kingdom that occupied what are now southern and southeastern Yemen and part of the present-day Sultanate of Oman) also saw rebellions and Abu Hamza Mukhtar bin Auf Azdi raised the

flag of rebellion and Abdullah bin Yahya, the ruler of Hadramawt joined him. Abu Hamza first captured Madinah and then moved towards Syria. Marwan bin Mohammad deputed Ibn Atya Sadi to confront him and they met at Wadi Qura. Abu Hamza was killed in the battle. Ibn Atya then proceeded to Yemen and confronted Abdullah bin Yahya who was ready to face him a battle ensued and it resulted in Abdullah bin Yahya's death. Ibn Atya cut off his head and sent it to Marwan. At the time Marwan bin Mohammad was at war with Dhahak Khwarji near Mosil, a letter written by Imam Ibrahim and addressed to Abu Muslim Khorasani was intercepted and given to Marwan. It contained instructions that included, "Don't spare even a single Arab or a descendent of an Arab. The natives of Khorasan who have embraced Islam will stand us in good stead. We should rely on them more". The letter also revealed that Banu Abbas had spread the net of conspiracy against Banu Umayyah for quite a long time and Imam Ibrahim whose center of operations was at Hamima in Balqa was the engineer of these plots.

Marwan bin Mohammad after reading the letter ordered his ruler in Balqa to arrest Imam Ibrahim and send him to the caliph. So, Imam Ibrahim bin Mohammad along with several members of his family was caught and sent to caliph Marwan as captives. They were put in jail at Harran. Along with Imam Ibrahim Sayeed bin Hisham bin Abdul Malik and his two sons, Uthman and Marwan, Abbas bin Waleed bin Abdul Malik, Abdullah bin Umar bin Abdul Aziz and Abu Muhammad Sufyani were also imprisoned. In a matter of days an epidemic broke out in Harran and Imam Ibrahim, Abbas bin Waleed and Abdullah bin Umar bin Abdul Aziz died from the disease.

Sayeed bin Hisham along with the other prisoners killed the jailer, broke open the jail door and escaped. The inhabitants of Harran caught the escaping prisoners and killed them. Abu Mohammad Sufyani did not escape from jail with the others. He was released by Marwan bin Mohammad after he returned defeated from Zab river battle. Imam Ibrahim left his will at the time of his arrest and imprisonment that after his death his brother Abdullah bin Mohammad, popularly known as Abul Abbas Saffah would be his successor. He also willed that Abul Abbas Saffah should not stay in



Balqa but in Kufa. Imam Ibrahim, before his arrest, had directed that Abu Muslim Khorasani should be as their officer to comply with this order and then Imam Ibrahim sent Qahtaba bin Shabeeb to Abu Muslim with a black flag to revolt and capture Khorasan. Abdullah bin Mohammad Saffah along with his family settled in Kufa in accordance with the will of his brother.

Abu Muslim brought under his control the whole of Khorasan between 130 A.H. and 131 A.H. Then he sent Qahtaba bin Shabeeb with an army towards Kufa. Kufa was captured and then the oath at the hand of Abul Abbas Saffah Abdullah bin Mohammad followed. Upon receiving this news Marwan bin Mohammad left Harran with 120,000 warriors and marched towards Kufa. The confrontation between his army and Saffah's army under the command of his uncle Abdullah bin Ali took place adjacent to the Zab River. If Marwan bin Mohammad's army had the desire to fight, it could have easily defeated Abul Abbas Saffah's army. However in the midst of the battle at the point that Marwan had forced the greater portion of Abdullah bin Ali's army into retreat and there was no doubt left that Marwan would be victorious, the greater portion of Marwan's army refused to attack and continue the fight as if their purpose was to cause his defeat.

Abdullah bin Ali, finding himself on the verge of defeat and deciding to risk everything, attacked with a selected group of men. None of Marwan's leaders came forward to meet this last desperate challenge. Marwan tempted them with rewards and special favors but without response. Then he poured all his treasure on to the battlefield and told them to attack and after killing the weakened enemies, they could distribute it among themselves. The army failed to follow his orders and became engrossed in looting the exposed valuables and even those few who were still fighting left the battle and also began looting. Shocked at this disorder and chaos Marwan sent his son, Abdullah to stop the looting. As soon he reached where they were looting the treasure, they began to flee and left Marwan with only a few persons. Marwan was disillusioned with the disloyalty and disobedience of his army and escaped. He arrived in Mousil where the people taunted him for his defeat. He realized the futility of staying there and went to



Harran where his nephew Abbas bin Yazid bin Mohammad was the Governor. Marwan was defeated on Saturday 11 Jamad-al-Thani 132 A.H. along side of the Zab River. He had stayed at Harran for 20 days when he heard of Abdullah bin Ali's approach and he immediately left for Hims. When Abdullah bin Ali reached Harran, its Governor Abbas came out in black clothes and holding a black flag to receive him and took the oath for Saffah's caliphate at his hands. Abdullah bin Ali granted him pardon. When Marwan reached Hims, the citizens at first showed their obedience and respect but when they realized his military weakness, they prepared to revolt and fight him. Marwan left Hims after three days. The citizens of Hims wanted to rob him of his valuables. Marwan first tried to argue with them and make them see reason but they did not give up their attempts to overpower him and he fought with them and made them withdraw.

From Hims Marwan went to Damascus. Its governor was his cousin Waleed bin Muawiya bin Marwan bin Hakam. He did not stay there he only induced the governor to fight against the opponents of Banu Umayyah, he went to Palestine and stayed there hoping to lead a life of silence and retirement.

In Harran Abdullah bin Ali, after pulling down the jail where Ibrahim bin Mohammad had been in captivity, moved towards Damascus. On the way his brother Abdus Samad bin Ali whom Saffah had sent to help him with a body of 8000 soldiers, arrived. Then he, after taking the oath from the people of Harran, went to Damascus via Qansareen and Balbak and laid siege to it. After a short siege he entered Damascus on Wednesday 5 Ramadan 132 A.H. by force and blood flowed in its streets.

Its governor Waleed bin Muawiya was killed in the confrontation. After the massacre and victory Abdullah bin Ali stayed there for 15 days and then went to Palestine. He had just arrived at the Palestine border when he received a letter from Abdullah bin Saffah asking him to send his brother Saleh bin Ali in pursuit of Marwan. Marwan left Palestine and went to Arish (town in the northeastern section of the Sinai Peninsula), then to the Nile River and then to Said. Saleh continued the pursuit and camped at Fustat (this was the earliest Arab settlement in Egypt south of modern Cairo) from there he sent a

division of his army in search of Marwan. By chance, Saleh's soldiers came across Marwan's cavalry.

Marwan's horsemen were already in low spirits and frustrated they did not fight and fled away and a few of them were also captured. When they were interrogated, they revealed Marwan's location, informing them that he was at Boseer. The officer of Saleh's division Abu Aun thought it best to launch a night attack on Marwan for he knew that to face him would not be easy and they attacked as planned. Surprised at the sudden attack, Marwan came out of his house. A soldier was laying in wait for him attacked him with a spear. He fell down and one of his men said, "The Amir al-Muminin is dead." Hearing it Abu Aun and his men rushed to him and cut off his head and sent it to Abul Abbas Abdullah Saffah.

This occurred on 28 Dhul Hijjah 132 A.H. corresponding to 5 August 750 AD and with it came to end the Caliphate of Banu Umayyah and began the Caliphate of Banu Abbas. Following Marwan's death his sons Abdullah and Obaidullah, fled to Ethiopia. The Africans did not grant them safe passage and they killed Obaidullah and Abdullah escaped to Palestine and began to live there in hiding. During the Caliphate of Mahdi, the governor of Palestine arrested him and sent him to the court of Mahdi and he put him into prison.

### **The Reign of Marwan bin Mohammad**

Marwan bin Mohammad was the last caliph of Banu Umayyah. So, he is generally regarded as the man responsible for the ruin of the caliphate of Banu Umayyah. However, the real causes of its ruin were created by his predecessor's negligence long before his caliphate. The duration of Marwan's caliphate was slightly less than six years and he never had a single day of peace during the entire period.

He spent the entire reign of his caliphate on horseback. His hard work, bravery, and firmness can not be measured easily because he was given a realm that suffered from an incurable disease. Had he acceded to the throne earlier, he could have delayed the downfall of the caliphate of Banu Umayyah for some time however, in his time he failed to counteract the shortcomings of Banu Umayyah's government

and Banu Abbas's conspiracies. Marwan was not a man of a high mental caliber and wisdom to have been able to breathe new life into a government that was struggling to survive. His whole life was spent in disputes and battles. During his reign, only swords shined over the Islamic World and no one had any rest. Nor was there time to make *Jihad* against the infidels. During his reign, Muslim blood was spilled on an unprecedented scale.

Marwan was born in 70 A.H. or 72 A.H. while his father Mohamunad bin Marwan was the governor of Jazirah. His mother was a slave from Kurdistan. She was owned by Ibrahim Ushtar. Mohammad bin Marwan took her in battle and it was from her that Marwan was born.

### **A Synopsis of Banu Umayyah's Caliphate**

1- The internal feuds and secret conspiracies that started from the second half of Uthman bin Affan's caliphate ended with Amir Mu'awiya being recognized as the caliph and Banu Umayyah's caliphate being founded. The greatest cause for the ruin of the caliphate of Banu Umayyah and a stigma being attached to the world of Islam began at the hands of the founder of the Banu Umayyah dynasty, Amir Muawiya making his son Yazid, the heir-apparent established hereditary succession. The epidemic of succession started in such a virulent form that the Muslims have not been able to rid themselves of it until now. The consequence of his action was that the just and beneficial social equality that was established by Islam was destroyed and it was replaced by family rule, which has always been a curse for mankind. Among the Banu Umayyah dynasty Amir Muawiya, Abdul Malik bin Marwan and Waleed bin Abdul Malik occupy a distinctive place in respect to their conquests of territory and the quality of their statecraft. Then followed Umar bin Abul Aziz who was a unique caliph in the dynasty. His caliphate was based on the era of the rightly guided caliph's Abu Bakr As-Siddiq and Umar bin Khattab. Because he was absorbed with the religion and doing things for Allah's sake, he did not resemble any caliph of Banu Umayyah in any way. Though his period of caliphate was very short, it uplifted the status of the caliphate and despite all kinds of objectionable and condemnable activities the caliphate of Banu

Umayyah occupies a place of pride by virtue of Omar bin Abdul Aziz ر. ه. ه. Hisham bin Abdul Malik was a caliph who can be put into the same category with the three other distinctive caliphs just mentioned.

Not even 10 years passed after Hisham bin Abdul Malik and the magnificent dynasty of Banu Umayyah collapsed and was leveled with its foundations destroyed. Except for the five caliphs mentioned the rest of Banu Umayyah's caliphs were debauched, cowardly, unconcerned and devoid of sense and foresight. They were not fit to be the supreme leaders of a vast empire like the caliphate of Banu Umayyah. Islam had put an end to music and drinking but the caliphs of Banu Umayyah, restored these destructive habits, which continue even to this day among the Muslims.

2- One of the crimes on the record of Banu Umayyah worth mentioning is that Islam had eliminated the discrimination of families and tribes and united them into a single brotherhood and a single tribe of believers. Banu Umayyah revived the prejudice and discrimination of the tribes and provided the impetus to bring back the fervor of nationalism of the days of ignorance. They reminded the Arabs of their forgotten habits and the Muslims began to prefer nation and tribe to Islamic brotherhood. That which they recreated brought about their ultimate destruction, by the Alawis and the Abbasids exploiting the instrument of family discrimination and it provided the method for the ruin of Banu Umayyah.

3- In order to establish and strengthen their rule and caliphate Banu Umayyah never hesitated in perpetrating atrocities on people and even utilizing murder as a political solution. The most famous and efficient Amirs, governors, agents and lieutenants of provinces and states were those who most mercilessly killed people and employed the strictest measures of discipline. They adopted a policy of oppression under compulsion in order to maintain their authority but ultimately the same policy caused their downfall because the popular sympathy and support went out of the people's hearts due to living in constant terror.

4- Banu Umayyah was undoubtedly famous and a leader tribe among the tribes of Quraish in Arabia. The tribe produced people that were more talented than their contemporaries in matters of counseling and

planning and understood the principles of the government and statecraft better than the other tribes. The tribe had acquired these traits even before the advent of Islam. However, it did not make them invulnerable to a political misfit being born into their tribe. If the custom of succession was not followed and the choice of the caliph was confined only to the tribe of Banu Umayyah, if the Muslims chose the better and the most qualified from among them, it would have been an injustice and a mistake but in that case the condition of the Caliphate of Banu Umayyah would not have worsened so much and the world of Islam would not have suffered such a great loss. If this had been their way, the caliphate of Banu Umayyah probably would have prolonged its term and the grievances the people had against them might not have developed in the destructive manner that we have recorded.

5-Banu Umayyah had superiority over other Arab tribes in respect of their ability to formulate and implement secret planning, conspiracies and deceptions, which their caliphate was based upon and temporarily strengthened by. It is the irony of fate that they were destroyed by their own methods. The Banu Hashim defeated them with their own techniques although the Banu Hashim were their disciples in these matters. This was due to the devastating intoxication with power and wealth, which completely blinded them and made them neglectful of their own security. The evil practice of succession only added to their ignorance and carelessness even more.

6- Besides the things mentioned above, Banu Umayyah had some qualities, which were rarely seen after them and their successors did not incorporate them into their form of governance. For instance, the caliphate of Banu Umayyah extended the conquests of the rightly guided Caliph's to the far corners of the world. They conquered China in the East and up to the Atlantic Ocean in the West, the entire civilized world of their time was under their control. It was during their empire that Islam reached the distant islands of the oceans, the sands of the African continent and the plains of India. Islamic rule had spread everywhere in the world having one center and one capital. After Banu Umayyah the Muslims rarely had a chance to conquer new territories virtually the conquest of new lands

ended with them. Only the government was maintained and after them even a single Islamic center was gone, separate governments were formed and established and among them, the caliphate of the Abbasids was the largest.

7- During the caliphate of Banu Umayyah, the Arabs enjoyed the pride and position of victors. The Arab morals, the Arabic language, the Arab culture and the Arab customs and fashions were dominant everywhere. However, after Banu Umayyah non-Arabs of conquered nations began to enjoy the privilege of ruling over the Arabs and refused to recognize the Arab's virtues, qualities and their greatness of conquest.

8- The Khawarij, Shia and other groups were born before the reign of Banu Umayyah, yet they faced these challenges using as the basis of their religious and legal arguments only the Quran and the Hadith. Except for the Book and the Sunnah, they never recognized anything else to be qualified for judgment. Later, many groups among the Muslims were born which diminished the importance of the Book and the Sunnah and accepted as sufficient the sayings and the personal judgment in legal matters of their saints, religious teachers, Imams and institutional scholars. That was why during the caliphate of Banu Umayyah the attention of the Muslims was always centered on the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. Then followed the indifference to and carelessness with the Qur'an and the evil increased to such an extent that in our times today it is not regarded as essential for a religious scholar to have read and understood the Quran with meditation and contemplation.

9- During the time of the rightly guided caliphs, success and victory were measured in relation to eliminating 'Shirk' (to associate anything as a partner with Allāh) and deviation and bringing people to Tawhid (affirmation of the Oneness of Allāh) and the worship of Allāh and the religion of Islam as their way of life. Wealth and material prosperity and grandeur had no value. However, during the caliphate of Banu Umayyah, wealth and pageantry came to be regarded as a sign of success and the money of the *bait al-mal* (Islamic treasury) began to be spent on those who could prove useful and a source of strength for the caliphate and the authority of

the dynasty of Banu Umayyah. Those who were not likely to help them or those whom they did not think it necessary to keep good relations with were treated indifferently and denied their rights. This evil practice increased in the later caliphates even more and selfishness and internal rivalry and animosity continued increasing among the general Muslims in the same proportion.

10- In the beginning of Islam and during the rightly guided caliphate, the Muslims' lives were very simple and their necessities of life were very limited. During the reign of Banu Umayyah, the use of luxuries began and the martial life style that they originally prided themselves on began to disappear by degrees. Beautiful clothes, magnificent buildings and luxuries began to be used as necessities of life and in the same proportion the models of Abu Bakr ؓ and Umar bin Khattab ؓ dwindled.

### The efforts of Banu Umayyah's Rivals

The consequence of the rivalry that was created between Banu Hashim and Banu Umayyah after the martyrdom of Uthman bin Affan ؓ and the apparent renunciation of the caliphate by Imam Hasan ؓ after Ali bin Abu Talib ؓ was that Banu Umayyah overpowered Banu Hashim militarily and administratively. To take over of the caliphate by Banu Umayyah after the battles of Jamal and Siffin and the confrontations with the khawarij posed such a loss to Banu Hashim that they had felt their inability to get the caliphate and were not able to use power to retake it. However, the accession of Yazid to the caliphate after Amir Muawiya ؓ and the innovation of hereditary succession was in terms of Islam an obvious major flaw that made Banu Umayyah vulnerable. Therefore, Imam Husain ؓ took the daring step of trying to retake the caliphate despite the advice of his sympathizers, which resulted in the disaster of Karbala.

Amir Muawiya's weak successor Yazid and Yazid's wicked governor Ibn Zeyad with his despicable actions were not only deterrents to Banu Hashim but they also damaged the popularity of the authority of Banu Umayyah and encouraged and emboldened the masses to express their opposition to them. That resulted in the efforts of Ibn Zubair ؓ. When the misfortune of Ibn Zubair ؓ occurred, the holder



of the power and authority of Banu Umayyah was a strong man. He not only regained the power lost to Ibn Zubair ruthlessly but also instilled terror and fear in the people even more. At this point, there was no opportunity for the Banu Hashim to use their swords to regain power. So they adopted another course of action, in the heat of their anger over the injustices vindictiveness took over their strategy. They utilized the techniques displayed by Abdullah bin Saba and his followers, which had caused them to suffer the losses of Siffin and Azrah. Among the Banu Hashim, only two families had the character of leadership, one the descendants of Ali bin Abi Talib ؑ and the other the descendants of Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib ؑ. Ali ؑ was the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law and Abbas ؑ was his uncle. These two families were considered from the Prophet's family and their greatness and leadership was universally recognized. Since Ali ؑ had faced hardship directly at the hands of Banu Umayyah, the Alawiites were more emotional than the Abbasids. Similarly, Imam Husain's martyrdom caused even more emotional feelings among the Fatimids than in the Alawiites and so they were more intent on taking revenge. The Alawiites had two groups, one that thought that Imam Husain ؑ deserved the caliphate and the other, which felt that Mohammad bin Al-Hanafia was the most deserving. The third group was the Abbasids. The most powerful group was the Fatimids or Husaniites because after Karbala they had more popular sympathy. Secondly, due to their being the descendants of Fatima bint Muhammad ؑ they commanded the most respect and love.

The second group after them was of Mohammad bin Al-Hanafia followed immediately by the Abbasids later on the Fatimids were also divided into two groups, one which supported Zaid bin Ali Husain and were called Zaidiites and the other which took the oath from Ismail bin Jafar Sadiq and were known as the Ismailies. The above-mentioned groups were inimical to Banu Umayyah and friendly to those supporting the Prophet's family. You have read above about the deaths of Zaid bin Ali bin Husain and his son Yahya as well as the efforts of Mohammad bin Al-Hanafia and the actions taken by Mukhtar in Kufa. Whenever the Alawiites had an opportunity, they never missed the chance to revolt but they often met with failure. The Abbasids continued to take lessons from the Alawiites' activities and



their consequences. They continued to make efforts against Banu Umayyah with great care and foresightedness. All three groups adopted the same policy to convert the people to their own beliefs covertly and take the oath from them secretly until they were able to gain enough power to face and defeat Banu Umayyah. To see this mission fulfilled they sent their missionaries to different provinces and states, secretly preached the function of love for the Prophet's family, exposed the negative qualities in Banu Umayyah's government and told them that it was the Prophet's family alone who deserved the caliphate and the authority to govern. This propaganda work was started with great care, diligence and determination. It had started from the reign of Abdul Malik bin Marwan and all the three groups were aware of the activities of the others. Since they had a common enemy, they had no rivalry or enmity against one another. If they stumbled over a secret of the other, they tried their best not to betray or expose it. They had separate agents and deputies but they were instructed to avoid using inflammatory words in their preaching which could bring them into opposition with one of the other groups. For instance, instead of declaring the greatness and virtues of Abbas or Mohammad bin Al-Hanafia or Imam Zainul Abedeen, they used the common expression "the Prophet's family" and by so doing, they tried their utmost to prove themselves worthy of the caliphate. They never opposed one another and they even went to the extent to consider it lawful to help and sympathize with the Khwarij. In the passion of their opposition to Banu Umayyah, they considered the Khwarij, as allies when it was expedient. From the very beginning, the Khwarij called Banu Umayyah unbelievers and always tried to harm them and even though they were just as inimical to Ali and his descendants, it served their purposes at times to ally themselves with the Khwarij. In these secret missions of propagation, the Alawiites were always too hasty and they did not do their job efficiently. Because of this, the caliphs of Banu Umayyah had constant information on the activities and intrigues of the Alawiites and they had many opportunities to take deterrent action against them. However, they remained in the dark about the conspiracies of the Abbasids and so the Banu Umayyah were able to score successes against the Alawiites but not the Abbasids.

Besides the above-mentioned plans, the Abbasids took another precaution also. They did not make a large city like Madinah, Makkah, Kufa, Basra or Damascus their headquarters. They chose as their capital and the center of all their activities a little known village, Hamimah, which was a land grant by Banu Umayyah and was located between Damascus and Madinah and despite being so near to Damascus, it was safe from the attention of the caliphs and governors of Banu Umayyah. The efforts and conspiracies of the Alawiites were always being exposed, and they continued to be killed because of them. However, Banu Abbas were safe from such harm and the development of their plans moved ahead moderately. Their progress speeded up when Mohammad bin Al-Hanafia joined Banu Abbas and formed a consolidated group. When Abu Hashim bin Mohammad declared to his followers at the time of his death that Mohammad bin Ali Abbas at-Hamimah should be their new leader. He emphatically exhorted those who had been trying to capture the caliphate for Banu Hashim to continue their efforts under the command of Mohammad bin Ali and recognize him as the one in command. When such a formidable group of the Alawiites joined the Abbasids, the latter started making efforts with greater courage and regularity and most of the increased power was controlled by the Abbasids. Mohammad bin Ali Abbasi was the leader of that very formidable group. When he died in 124 A.H., his son Imam Ibrahim succeeded him. Imam Ibrahim based the movement on broader and more consistent principles and assigned well chosen missionary personnel for specific regions and spread, in an orderly and well organized way, the network of his movement in the Islamic provinces like Iraq, Khorasan, Persia, Syria, and the Hijaz. Fortunately, Imam Ibrahim came across a man who shouldered the entire responsibility of taking the mission to a speedy success. That man was Abu Muslim Khorasani.

Imam Ibrahim had made Abu Muslim Khorasani the leader of the missionaries of Iraq and Khorasan and ordered them to work under him and obey him. He had been in correspondence with Abu Muslim and kept him informed of all his intentions. This had the benefit that Imam Ibrahim did not have to correspond with each deputy directly. After his death his brother, Abdullah bin Saffah succeeded him who

was prudent and wise like Imam Ibrahim. When Abu Muslim's ability and power were about to produce tangible results, Abu Muslim increased his activities and took hold of power in Khorasan. Banu Umayyah came to know about Imam Ibrahim and the Abbasids movement after Abu Muslim had already imposed his control over Khorasan. That was the proper time for the emergence of the movement. The Abbasids did not suffer any losses or meet with failure because by the time they were known to Banu Umayyah they already had established themselves.

After Imam Ibrahim's death, Abu Muslim began to gain power in Khorasan and the symptoms of Banu Umayyah's downfall and ruin had begun to manifest themselves. Banu Abbas's and the Alawiites's supporters and accomplices in their stratagem gathered in a house to select their officers in Dhul Hijjah 130 A.H. on the eve of Hajj in Makkah. The problems under discussion were how to bring about Banu Umayyah's fall, the exact plan of how to take the caliphate from their possession, how to achieve final success quickly and who should be made the next caliph. The meeting was attended by Abul Abbas Abdullah Saffah's brother Abu Jafar Mansoor in addition to a few noblemen from the descendants of Ali ؑ. The people present in the meeting supported the idea that Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Hasan bin Ali known as Nafse Zakia (literally the pure soul) should be the new caliph and he was chosen unanimously. It was a very critical occasion because the joint efforts made by the supporters of Ali ؑ and those of Banu Abbas were responsible for weakening Banu Umayyah's Sultanate along with the occupation of Khorasan by Abu Muslim. Had the meeting created dissension between Banu Abbas and the Alawiites at the meeting a wave of discord would have traveled immediately from Makkah to the end of Khorasan and trying to correct such a situation would have caused losses and the caliphate of Banu Umayyah, which was nearly dead could have come back to life again. However, Abu Jafar Mansoor's intelligence and cleverness did not allow him to contradict the choice of the Alawiites, the result of the meeting was that Ali's ؑ supporters became more active and their efforts proved very helpful to the Abbasids.

## **Abu Muslim Khorasani**

Abu Muslim's name was Ibrahim bin Uthman bin Bash-Shâr. He was an Iranian by race and was said to be from the descendants of Barzechamhar. He was born in Isfahan. His parents had settled in a village adjacent to Kufa. When his father Uthman died, he was seven years old. His father left instructions in his will for his son to be brought up and tutored by Isa bin Musa Sarraj. Isa brought him to Kufa. Abu Muslim learned saddle making from Isa and lived with him in Kufa. Isa bin Musa traveled to Khorasan, Jazirah and Mousil to sell his saddles and his business always kept him on a journey and in contact with all levels of society. It was believed by the authorities that he was a deputy of Banu Hashim and the Alawites. Other members of his family were also suspected and the governor of Kufa, Yusuf bin Omar, imprisoned Isa bin Musa and his cousin, Idris bin Ma'qal and their uncle Asim bin Yunus Ajali. Khalid Qasri the former governor has also inmate at the same prison.

Abu Muslim used to go to the jail to visit Isa bin Musa. Many of the inmates had been imprisoned for activities against Banu Umayyah and there were those who had come to hate Banu Umayyah for being imprisoned by them. Among this group were some captives who were actually the deputies of Banu Abbas or Banu Fatma and Abu Muslim was moved by their statements. Very soon, he won their confidence and became one of their supporters. By chance, Qahtaba bin Shabeeb who used to propagate Abbasid ideology to the inhabitants of Khorasan was leaving for Hamimah. He met those captives of Kufa and was informed that Isa's and Asim's servant Abu Muslim was a very clever and worthy fellow. He invited Abu Muslim to accompany him with the permission of Isa and they left for Hamimah together. He presented Abu Muslim to Imam Ibrahim. Ibrahim said to Abu Muslim "What is your name?" Abu Muslim said, "My name is Ibrahim bin Uthman bin Bash-Shâr." Imam Ibrahim said, "No your name is now Abdur Rahman." From that time, he came to be known as Abdur Rahman. It was Imam Ibrahim who gave him the Kunya Abu Muslim and borrowed Abu Muslim from Qahtaba bin Shabeeb. This was to establish an alias for Abu Muslim, which eventually replaced his real name.

[Editors note: In Arabic it is endearing to refer to a man by the title of "father of" followed by the name of his first son. This is also applicable to a woman and she is entitled "mother of" and the name of her first son. In Arabic, this is known as kunya and has no English equivalent.]

For a few days, Abu Muslim remained in the service of Imam Ibrahim and the Imam studied his nature and ability. Then the Imam arranged a marriage with the daughter of one of his famous deputies Abu Najm Imran bin Ismail. Abu Najm was one of those who were dedicated to bringing the Islamic caliphate to the descendants of Ali ؑ. The intended benefit from the marriage of Abu Muslim was to solidify the connection and get the support of Ali's followers and prevent any weakness in the relation of the two groups. After making these arrangements, Imam Ibrahim sent Abu Muslim to Khorasan and informed all the missionaries and deputies that he made him the administrator of all the territories of Khorasan and that all must follow him in the work of Banu Hashim. The well-known and active deputies of Khorasan who had been working since the time of Mohammad bin Abbasi, Imam Ibrahim's father, were as follows: Sulaiman bin Katheer, Malik bin Haithan, Zeyad bin Saleh, Talha bin Zuraiq, and Omar bin Ayun. All of them belonged to the tribe of Khaza'a. Qahtaba bin Shabeeb bin Khalid bin Sada'n was related to the tribe of Tai. Abu Uyaina, Musa bin Kab, Lahaz bin Qareet, Qasim bin Majashi, and Aslam bin Salam were from the tribe of Tamim. Abu Dawood Khalid bin Ibrahim Shibai, Abu Ali Harwi also known as Shibl bin Tahman, and Abu Najm Imran bin Ismail... When Abu Muslim arrived in Khorasan, Sulaiman bin Kaseer sent him back due to his young age. All these deputies were old, matured and experienced. They thought it inexpedient and unwise to make a man of such a young age to be their officer and superintendent of their secret activities.

When Abu Muslim reached Khorasan, Abu Dawood Khalid bin Ibrahim Shibai had gone towards Mawaraunnahr (between the Amu [Oxus] and Syr rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) for some work. When he returned to Merv and read Imam Ibrahim's letter, he asked the people about Abu Muslim. His friends told him that Sulaiman bin Katheer had turned him back on account of his

young age and that he would not be able to perform the required work and that he would put them and all who were engaged in the work of propagation into trouble. Abu Dawood assembled all the deputies and said, "Allāh endowed the Prophet ﷺ with the knowledge of the highest level. His family members are the inheritors of that knowledge. His family members are the repositories of that knowledge and they are the successors of the Prophet ﷺ. Have you any doubt?" The audience said, "No." Abu Dawood said, "Why did you let doubts creep in? The Imam must have considered the situation and tested this man and then sent him to us." When they heard him, they regretted having sent Abu Muslim away. Immediately a man was sent after him and he brought Abu Muslim back. All recognized him as the custodian and superintendent of their mission and began to obey him. As Sulaiman bin Katheer had sent him back at first, Abu Muslim was a bit displeased with him. Abu Muslim spread out all the deputies in the various cities and began to strengthen their movement all over Khorasan. In 129 A.H., Imam Ibrahim wrote to him to see him on the eve of Hajj that year so that he might receive proper instructions regarding propagating their doctrine. He also asked him to bring Qahtaba bin Shabeeb and all funds and goods collected with him. It is important to note that the time of Hajj was ideally suited for such secret conspiracies. People from all over the world come for Hajj. No one has the chance to suspect others and the conspirators found it very convenient for meetings and deliberations so they never missed the Hajj. Abu Muslim along with the other deputies and Qahtaba bin Shabeeb left for Makkah to see Imam Ibrahim. When he reached Qaumas, he received a letter from the Imam asking him to return to Khorasan and if he had not left Khorasan, he should stay there and no longer conceal his propagation he should do it openly and he should collect those who had taken the oath and begin the use of power. Immediately after reading the letter, Abu Muslim returned to Merv and Qahtaba bin Shabeeb, with all money and material left to go to Imam Ibrahim. He took the road to Jurjan and on the outskirts of town, he sent for Khalid bin Barmak and Abu Aun. They came with money and provisions at once and they all proceeded to the Imam.

When Abu Muslim received the permission to make the propagation openly and use his power for territorial gains, it was during the time

of the constant battles between Kermani and Nasr bin Sayyar in Khorasan. As has been mentioned above Abu Muslim collected his men and pitched his tents between Kermani and Nasr bin Sayyar. At last Kermani was killed and his son Ali bin Kermani joined Abu Muslim. Abu Muslim expelled Nasr from Merv and occupied it. But after staying there for a few days, he left Merv for another part of Khorasan. Nasr bin Sayyar wrote a letter to Marwan bin Mohammad, the caliph in Damascus, for reinforcements. Marwan bin Mohammad was at the time at war with Dahhak bin Qais Khwarji and could not spare any troops. It was during this period, that Imam Ibrahim's letter, which he sent to Abu Muslim asking him to kill all the Arabic speaking people in Khorasan including Nasr and Kermani, was intercepted. It was presented to Marwan II. That was the first information that Banu Umayyah had about the conspiracy of the Abbasids. Marwan wrote to the governor of Balqa to go and arrest Imam Ibrahim at Hamimah. He was arrested and put in jail as has been mentioned above. When Abu Muslim started the work of calling and telling the people openly in Khorasan, the Khorasanis rushed to him in crowds.

With the beginning of 130 A.H., Abu Muslim started taking the oath from the people for following the Book of Allāh and 'Sunnah' of the Prophet ﷺ and obedience to *Ahle-Bait*. Kermani, Sheeban Khwarji and Nasr bin Sayyar were angry with him for this action. But as they were engaged in the warfare, they could not harm him. Following Kermani's death his son Ali bin Kermani, took over the leadership of his father's group while Abu Muslim also gained much power. Nasr bin Sayyar and Sheeban Khawarji were equally powerful as was stated previously. In Khorasan there were the four powers.

Abu Muslim wanted to draw Sheeban Khwarji towards himself and induced Ibn Kermani to go to him. Nasr bin Sayyar wanted to reconcile with Sheeban Khawarji so that he might be free to fight with Abu Muslim. But Abu Muslim manipulated through Ali bin Kermani in order to prevent them from reconciling with each other. When they failed in their attempt to reconcile, Abu Muslim, found the situation advantageous and sent Nasr bin Naim with a group to Herat. Nasr bin Naim reached Herat and captured it while the governor of Herat



was unprepared and expelled Isa bin Ma'qal Huraishi, Nasr bin Sayyar's governor. When Yahya ibn Naim bin Hubairah heard this news, he called on Ibn Kermani and said to him, "Compromise with Nasr. If you do so, Abu Muslim will be ready to fight with him and will spare you. And if you do not come to terms with Nasr, Abu Muslim will make peace with him and be ready to fight with you." Yahya Shebani at once wrote to Nasr, "We want to make peace with you". Nasr immediately agreed to it as it coincided with his own strategy that he had tried to implement with Ibn Kermani's father.

Abu Muslim drew the attention of Ali bin Kermani who was the partner of Sheeban Khwarji, to the previous treachery of Nasr saying, "Nasr bin Sayyar is your father's killer." The point of this was to bring ibn Kermani back to the side of Abu Muslim and avoid him making a pact with Nasr Sayyar. Ali bin Kermani parted with Sheeban Khawarji at once, and started fighting against him. Abu Muslim arrived to help Ibn Kermani. On the other side Nasr bin Sayyar was ready to fight in support of Sheeban Khwarji. It was a very strange situation all the four fighting groups followed different ideologies and doctrines but in keeping with what ever opportunity presented itself and the proper time each one of them was busy planning to annihilate the third by winning the favor of the other two. In the meantime, there were many sympathizers of Ali in Khorasan and they all joined Abu Muslim.

Abdullah bin Muawiya bin Abdullah bin Jafar bin Abi Talib had taken the oath for the caliphate from the inhabitants in Kufa, but following Abdullah bin Omar bin Abdul Aziz's victory they left Kufa along with some of the people from Kufa and went towards Madain. Then they turned towards the mountainous territories and captured them and occupied Halwan, Qaumas, Isfahan and Rayy. They made Isfahan their stopping point. In 128 A.H., they brought Shiraz under their control. When Yazid bin Omar bin Hubairah became governor of Iraq, he sent an army to fight with Abdullah bin Muawiya. They fought near Istakar (located about 32 miles northeast of Shiraz in the region of Faras in southwestern Iran). Abdullah bin Muawiya was defeated. Many of his men were killed. Mansoor bin Jamhoor fled towards Sindh. He was chased but escaped. The men arrested from among Abdullah bin Muawiya's army included Abdullah bin Ali bin



Abdullah bin Abbas who was released by the governor of Kufa, Yazid bin Omar. Abdullah bin Muawiya ran away and went to Abu Muslim for help because he was a well-wisher of the Prophet's family. He went from Shiraz to Kerman and from there he went to Herat. At Herat Abu Muslim's governor Nasr bin Naim, arranged his lodging and then informed Abu Muslim of his arrival. Abu Muslim wrote back saying that he should kill Abdullah bin Muawiya and release his two sons. So, Nasr bin Naim acted accordingly.

With the beginning of 130 A.H., all the above-mentioned four powers started clashing with one another. At last, Ali bin Kermani and Abu Muslim defeated Nasr bin Sayyar and Sheeban Khwarji and captured Merv. Abu Muslim went to the Amir's palace and took the oath from the people there and delivered a sermon. Nasr, after losing the battle went to Nishapur via Sarkhas and Tus. Ali bin Kermani began to live with Abu Muslim and followed him blindly. Abu Muslim sent word to the defeated Sheeban Khwarji camped near Merv to take the oath at his hands. Then Sheeban Khwarji went to Sarkhas and the group of Bakr bin Wail rallied to him. When Abu Muslim heard about it, he sent a unit of his army to Sarkhas. A clash took place and Sheeban was killed. Abu Muslim then sent his deputies Musa bin Kâb and Abu Dawood Khalid bin Ibrahim to Abyuraw and Balkh respectively. Both scored victories. Abyuraw and Balkh were brought under occupation. Then he recalled Abu Dawood and made Yahya bin Naim the administrator of Balkh. Zeyad bin Abdur Rahman Qasri who was the governor of Balkh on behalf of Banu Umayyah went to Tirmiz after his defeat at the hands of Abu Dawood entered into correspondence with Yahya bin Naim and won him to his side. He collected Muslim bin Abdur Rahman Bahli, Isa bin Zarah Sulami, the rulers of Takharistan and Mawarannahr, the inhabitants of Balkh and Tirmiz and taking Yahya bin Naim along with his men, left to fight with Abu Muslim. All unanimously agreed and took a pledge to fight with the holders of black flags the symbol of Banu Abbas. Muqatil bin Hayyan Nabti was included in the army.

Abu Muslim grasped the situation and sent Abu Dawood to Balkh again. The two sides clashed along side of the river at a little distance from Balkh. Muqatil bin Hayyan Nabti was accompanied by Abu Sayeed Qurashi. The rear guard of the army was kept fully armed so

that the enemy would not attack them from behind. When the battle was in the full swing, Abu Sayeed Qurashi whose army was the rear guard and whose flag was also black by coincidence wanted to engage the enemy and decided to advance. When he moved up with his army, those on the front line forgot that a flag of theirs was also black and as soon as they saw Abu Sayeed's flag, they thought that Banu Abbas had defeated the rear guard and their army was moving ahead victoriously. This caused a panic and the front line troops ran off the battlefield. Many of them were drowned in the river and died. This freak occurrence resulted in a victory for Banu Abbas and Zeyad and Yahya took Tirmiz and Abu Dawood occupied Balkh.

After the victory Abu Muslim recalled Abu Dawood from Balkh and deputed Nasr bin Sabih Muzani as its ruler. As recorded above, Ali bin Kermani lived with Abu Muslim. His brother Uthman bin Kermani was also with him. Abu Dawood counseled Abu Muslim that it was essential to separate the two brothers from each other. Abu Muslim liked the idea and so he sent Uthman bin Kermani as the ruler of Balkh and when he reached Balkh, he made Farafza bin Zahir his deputy. Uthman bin Kermani along with Nasr bin Muzani, went to Marwarood. This news prompted Muslim bin Abdur Rahman Bahli to take the Egyptians with him and attack Balkh, which he captured it by force.

When Uthman and Nasr Muzani received this information, they left Marwarood and returned to Balkh. Their arrival instilled fear in Abdur Rahman's men and they evacuated Balkh at night. Nasr Muzani from one side and Uthman from the other side invaded Balkh. Nasr's soldiers did not interfere with the evacuating army but Uthman bin Kermani started to fight them as they fled after being defeated. Many were killed and Balkh escaped being lost to the Abbasids by a very thin margin. When they heard this news Abu Muslim and Abu Dawood counseled with each other and Abu Muslim went to Nishapur and Abu Dawood came back to Balkh. Abu Muslim was accompanied by Ali bin Kermani. He murdered Ali bin Kermani on the way to Nishapur. Abu Dawood in keeping with the counsel he had made with Abu Muslim captured Balkh, forced Abdur Rahman to flight and murdered Uthman bin Kermani. In this way, they settled the issue of the two brothers. You have read above that

Imam Ibrahim had first sent for Abu Muslim and then stopped him and asked him to make his propagation openly. Abu Muslim had sent Qahtaba bin Shabeeb with money and goods. Qahtaba met Imam Ibrahim and presented the money and goods. Imam Ibrahim sent a flag through him and asked him to go from Makkah to Khorasan. He himself returned to Hammiah. He was arrested soon after his arrival there. Qahtaba went to Abu Muslim with the flag and Abu Muslim put it with the vanguard and made Qahtaba its leader. Before the end of 130 A.H., he occupied the greater part of Khorasan and removed all his enemies. After killing Ali bin Kermani, Abu Muslim returned to Merv and sent Qahtaba towards Tus along with the military leaders like Abu Aun Abdul Malik bin Yazid, Khalid bin Barmak, Uthman bin Naheek and Khazim bin Khuzaima. The inhabitants of Tus fought back but suffered defeat. Qahtaba massacred them mercilessly. Then he made preparations for leading an attack on Tamim bin Nasr who was at Suzqan. Tamim bin Nasr was killed along with his 3,000 men. Qahtaba entered the city and ordered a general massacre and deputed Khalid bin Barmak to collect the booty. Then he intended to go to Nishapur where Nasr bin Sayyar was staying. Nasr fled from there to Qaumas. Qahtaba captured Nishapur in the beginning of Ramadan 130 A.H. and stayed there up to the end of Shawwal. From Kufa Yazid bin Omar bin Hubairah sent reinforcements to Nasr bin Sayyar under the command of the governor of Kufa, Nabata bin Hanzala. Nasr bin Sayyar did not stay long at Qaumas. He left for Jurjan. Nabata bin Hanzala along with his army reached Nasr bin Sayyar. Qahtaba left Nishapur and marched towards Jurjan in the beginning of Dhul Qadah.

When Qahtaba's men heard of the arrival of Nabata bin Hanzala along with a huge Syrian army at Jurjan, they were terrified. Qahtaba made an emotional speech to them, saying, 'Imam Ibrahim has predicted that you will face a huge army and be victorious over it.' It encouraged the soldiers. At last, there was a battle. Nabata bin Hanzala was killed along with his 10,000 men. Qahtaba achieved a grand victory. He cut off Nabata bin Hanzala's head and sent it to Abu Muslim. This battle was fought in the month of Dhul Hijjah 130 A.H. Qahtaba occupied Jurjan and killed 30,000 of its citizens. After defeat in Jurjan, Nasr bin Sayyar went towards Khawarurrai. The governor there was Abu Bakr Aqili. When Yazid bin Hubairah was

briefed on the situation, he sent a huge army under the command of Ibn Ghaleef to reinforce Nasr bin Sayyar. Qahtaba sent his son, Hasan bin Qahtaba from Jurjan to Khawarurrai. He sent another army from the rear under the command of Abu Kamil and Abul Qasim Sahrz bin Ibrahim and Abul Abbas Marwzi to help Hasan. When they reached the vicinity of Hasan's army, Abul Kamil parted with his men and joined Nasr and informed him of the activities of Hasan's army. At last, they fought and Hasan bin Qahtaba suffered a crushing defeat. Nasr sent the booty and the good tidings of victory to Yazid bin Omar bin Hubairah. This occurred in Muharram 131 A.H. While Nasr's messengers were leaving with the spoils of war and the news of victory Ibn Ghaleef, Nasr's ally was approaching with his army. They met outside of Rayy and Ibn Ghaleef took the valuables and the letter and camped there.

Nasr did not approve of Ibn Ghaleef taking the valuables and the letter that was supposed to go to their superior Yazid bin Omar. Nasr decided to go to Rayy. Ibn Ghaleef along with his army marched towards Hamadan but latter on he turned to Isfahan. Nasr on the night of 10 Muharram in 132 A.H. entered the Governor's headquarters at Rayy and captured it. Abu Muslim's arrival in Nishapur caused Nasr bin Sayyar's departure, he went to Rayy and stayed there for two days and on the third day, he became sick. As soon as he felt sick, he left Rayy and went to Sada immediately after his arrival he died, it was the 12<sup>th</sup> of Rabia Awwal 131 A.H. After his death, his men went to Hamadan, in west-central Iran. The ruler of Rayy was Habib bin Yazid Nahshali. When Qahtaba bin Shabeeb left Jurjan he took his army to Rayy, after Nasr's death, Habib bin Yazid and the Syrians who were with him left Rayy without fighting. Qahtaba, who was fighting on behalf of the Abbasids, occupied Rayy and confiscated the wealth and belongings of its citizens. Most of those who escaped Rayy went to Hamadan where Nasr Sayyar's men had gone. Qahtaba sent his son Hasan to Hamadan but they avoided Hamadan and went to Nahawand. Hasan reached Nahawand and laid siege to it. In 129 A.H., Yazid bin Omar bin Hubairah, who was fighting on behalf of the Umayyads, sent his son Dawood bin Yazid along with Amir bin Sabarah to battle against Abdullah bin Muawiya and they went up to Kerman fighting. They were encamped at

Kerman with a large army. When Yazid bin Omar bin Hubairah was informed of Nabata bin Hanzla's death, he wrote to Dawood and Ibn Sabarah and asked them to go ahead and fight against Qahtaba. Both left from Kerman having increased their already large army and arrived at Isfahan. Qahtaba deputed Muqatil bin Hakeem to face them. He was camped at Qum. Having heard that Hasan bin Qahtaba had besieged Nahawand, south of Hamadan, Ibn Sabarah made up his mind to save it. He decided to take on Muqatil and moved forward to fight against him. When the two armies clashed, Qahtaba's soldiers fought so bravely that Ibn Sabarah's soldiers were defeated and Ibn Sabarah himself was killed.

This occurred in the month of Rajab 131 A.H. Qahtaba sent the news of the victory to his son Hasan. He stayed at Isfahan for twenty more days and then went to Hasan and joined the siege. For three months, the citizens of Nahawand remained besieged. At last, it was captured and many of the inhabitants were put to death. Then Qahtaba sent Hasan to Halwan, which was easily captured. He then sent Abu Aun Abdul Malik bin Yazid Khorasani to invade the city of Zor. The administrator of the city was Uthman bin Sufyan. Abdullah bin Marwan bin Mohammad controlled the vanguard. Abu Aun and Uthman continued to fight until the end of Dhul Hijja finally Uthman was killed and his army lost the battle. Abu Aun Abdul Malik occupied the city of Mousil.

When Amir bin Sabarah was killed, Dawood bin Yazid fled to his father. When Dawood bin Yazid told his father, Yazid bin Omar bin Hubairah, the details of the defeat he gathered a large army and Caliph Marwan bin Mohammad also sent Hausrah bin Sohail Bahli to help him. Yazid bin Omar bin Hubairah along with Hausrah bin Sohail reached Halwan. Meanwhile, Qahtaba also moved towards Halwan and crossed the river Tigris near Anbâr, (an ancient Mesopotamian town located on the left bank of the Euphrates River in central Iraq.) Yazid bin Omar turned towards Kufa and sent Hausrah with 15,000 soldiers to move to Kufa also. Qahtaba crossed the river Euphrates from the Anbâr side on 8 Muharram 132 A.H. At the time, Yazid bin Omar bin Hubairah was camped at a distance of 23 miles from the mouth of the Euphrates. His men advised him to go to

Khorasan instead of Kufa and Qahtaba would of necessity give up his intention of going to Kufa and follow them. Yazid bin Omar did not agree to the opinion and crossed the Tigris near Madain and both the armies began to move along either side of the Euphrates. Qahtaba crossed it at a place where the water was not deep. A fierce battle was fought. Yazid bin Omar bin Hubairah's army suffered a defeat but Qahtaba was killed. When he was wounded, he ordered that the caliphate of Ali's supporters must be established in Kufa with Abu Salma as its 'Amir'. Hausrah, Yazid and Nabata fled to Wasit. Qahtabah's army chose Hasan bin Qahtaba as its leader. When the news reached Kufa, Mohammad bin Khalid Qasri collected all the supporters of Ali and revolted.

After receiving this news, Hausrah returned from Wasit to Kufa and besieged Mohammad bin Khalid in the Governor's headquarters of Kufa. At this point Hausrah's men accepted the invitation of the Abbasids and began to abandon him. Being compelled by these events, he went back to Wasit. Mohammad bin Khalid informed Qahtaba of the incident and of his occupation of the Governor's headquarters. Hasan bin Qahtaba entered Kufa, took Mohammad bin Khalid with him, visited Abu Salma and they selected Abu Salma as the Amir of Ali's supporters and took the oath with him. Abu Salma sent Hasan bin Qahtaba towards Wasit to fight with Ibn Hubairah and made Mohammad bin Khalid the governor of Kufa. Then Abu Salma sent Humaid bin Qahtaba towards Madain. Ahwaz in southwestern Iran was ruled over by Abdur Rahman bin Omar bin Hubairah. He fought with Bassam. Abdur Rahman lost and fled to Basra where Muslim bin Qutaiba Bahli was the ruler. After defeating Abdur Rahman, Bassam sent Sufyan bin Muawiya bin Yazid bin Muhallab to take over Basra. Muslim came out victorious. He kept Basra under his occupation until he received the news of Yazid bin Omar's death, upon hearing this news he evacuated Basra. Mohammad bin Jafar found the way clear and captured it. After a few days Abu Malik Abdullah bin Osaïd Khazai reached Basra on behalf of Abu Muslim. Abul Abbas Saffah publicly took the oath for his caliphate from the people and deputed Sufyan bin Muawiya as the governor of Basra.

At the time of Imam Ibrahim's death, the following members of his

family were present at Hamimah: Abul Abbas Abdullah Saffah, Abu Jafar Mansoor and Abdul Wahab. These three were Imam Ibrahim's brothers. Then there were Mohammad bin Ibrahim, Isa bin Musa, Dawood, Isa, Saleh, Ismail, Abdullah and Abdus Samad. The last being Imam Ibrahim's uncle.

Before his arrest, Imam Ibrahim had made his brother Abul Abbas Abdullah Saffah his successor and at the time of his death, he ordered him to go to Kufa and live there. In accordance to the will of Imam Ibrahim, Abul Abbas Abdullah Saffah left Hamimah along with the above-mentioned members of his family and went to Kufa. When he reached Kufa, Abu Salma had already established his rule firmly in Kufa. Abu Salma was Imam Ibrahim's deputy and superintendent of the movement there. However, since then all his attempts were directed towards making Ali's descendants the caliph. Qahtaba bin Shabeeb also was in favor of the same. Since Abu Hashim bin Mohammad (the leader of the descendants of Ali عليه السلام) had left a will that Mohammad bin Ali Abbasi (the leader of Banu Abbas at the time of Abu Hashim) should be recognized as the leader of his group, he could not decide what to do.

When he received the news that Abul Abbas was approaching with the supporters of Ali عليه السلام he came up to Hamam Ayun to receive him and lodged him at Waleed bin Sad's house and kept it as a guarded secret from all of the supporters of Ali عليه السلام and the commanders of the army for forty days. Abu Salma wanted somebody from among the descendants of Abi Talib to be made caliph and the oath be taken for him. But Abu Jaham who was from among the supporters of Ali عليه السلام disagreed with him. He felt that by declaring their caliphate by the descendants of Ali bin Abi Talib عليه السلام they could be deprived of the caliphate and the people might recognize Abul Abbas as the caliph. Had Abul Abbas not come to Kufa in accordance to Imam Ibrahim's will, Abu Salma might have possibly succeeded in making the descendants of Abu Talib the caliph. Abu Salma did not want the people to know about the arrival of Abul Abbas and become attracted towards him. So meanwhile Abu Salama wrote a letter to Imam Jafar Sadiq bin Imam Baqar bin Imam Zainul Abedeen bin Husain bin Ali requesting him to come to Kufa and be the caliph. He replied in the negative.



By chance, the people came to know about Abul Abbas Saffah's arrival in Kufa. Now there were two kinds of people in Kufa. One group who wanted the caliphate for the descendants of Abbas ؑ and the other who wanted it for the descendants of Ali bin Abi Talib ؑ. The Abbasids began to throng about Abul Abbas Saffah. The supporters of Ali ؑ also began to visit him. When the people were informed that Abu Salma, the governor of Kufa, known as the minister for the Prophet's family had not fulfilled the conditions of playing host to Abul Abbas Abdullah Saffah, many of Ali's supporters became supporters of Abdullah Saffah. His presence in Kufa won popular attention and sympathy to himself. Ultimately on 12 Rabi'a Awwal Friday 132 A.H. corresponding with 30 October 749 AD, the people assembled, took Abul Abbas Abdullah Saffah from his residence and brought him to the Governor's headquarters. Abdullah Saffah then came to grand mosque, made a sermon, led the Friday congregational prayers and ascended the pulpit and made another sermon and took the oath from the people. His sermon was very eloquent and instructive. He proved himself worthy of the caliphate and promised to increase their stipends and then praised the Kufans. After this sermon Abdullah Saffah's uncle Dawood climbed up to the pulpit and delivered a lecture and praised the caliphate of Banu Abbas in well-expressed words, condemned Banu Umayyah and said to the people, "As Amir al-Muminin Abdullah Saffah suffers from fever and pain in the limbs today, he could not speak much. Pray for him." Then Abdullah Saffah went to the Governor's headquarters and his brother Abu Jafar Mansoor continued to take the oath from the people on his behalf in the mosque until late at night. Abdullah Saffah then visited Abu Salama's tent. Abu Salma took the oath no doubt but he was not happy that the oath and the caliphate went to the Abbasids in his heart. Abdullah Saffah handed over deputyship of the adjoining areas of Kufa to his uncle Dawood and sent his other uncle Abdullah bin Ali to help Abu Aun and his nephew Isa bin Musa to help Qahtaba who lay besieging Ibn Hubairah in Wasit and Tamimi bin Jafar bin Tamim bin Abbas to help Hama'd bin Qahtaba in Madain. In this way, he dispatched and deputed his leaders everywhere. Abu Muslim was present in Khorasan and was purging it of all the enemies of the Abbasids. When Abul Abbas became caliph and came to Kufa,



he consulted Abu Muslim on all important issues and acted as he advised.

This was a very critical and dangerous time in the Islamic world. Wars and feuds had broken out in every province and state. It was very difficult to subdue Yazid bin Omar bin Hubairah in Wasit. On the other side Marwan bin Mohammad, the Umayyah caliph, was in power in Syria. There was chaos in the Hijaz. The condition of Egypt was also bad. The movement of the Abbasids had no influence in Spain. Umayyah leaders were in power in Jazirah and Armenia and were ready to rise up against the Abbasids and Khorasan was not fully under control. The Abbasids could not establish their government in Basra either. Hadramaut, Yamamah and Yemen were also no better. As soon as Abdullah Saffah took over as caliph, there appeared dissension among the descendants of Ali bin Abi Talib ؑ also known as the Alawis, who were partners until then. They were surprised and aggrieved at the ascension of the Abbasids because they expected their own caliphate to be established. The responsibility and credit of this great success by the Abbasids rested on the last will and testament of Mohammad bin Hanafia's son Abu Hisham Abdullah, which he bequeathed at the time of his death in favor of Mohammad bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas. This final testament led the Kisanya sect of the supporters of Ali ؑ to form a belief that Mohammad bin Hanafia was the Imam after Ali bin Abi Talib ؑ. Then followed his son Abu Hisham Abdullah, then Mohammad bin Ali Abbasi, his son Imam Ibrahim and finally Abdullah Saffah, the present Imam. Thus, a large section of the supporters of Ali parted with the other Aliwiites and joined the Abbasids, and the Alawiites or the Fatimids did not have a chance to stand in opposition to the Abbasids and they suffered distress and anxiety over their predicament.

When Marwan bin Mohammad the last caliph of Banu Umayyad, was killed, Habib bin Murrah, the governor of Balqa came out holding a white flag. Aqil of Qansareen also rose up though he had already taken the oath for Abdullah bin Ali Abbasi. The citizens of Hims also joined him. Then the governor of Armenia Ishaq bin Muslim Aqili, also stood in revolt against the Abbasids. To put down all the rebellions Abdullah Saffah sent his leaders and relatives and they

succeeded by degrees. However, Yazid bin Omar bin Hubariah was still in occupation of Wasit and no leader was able to defeat him. Compelled by this situation, Abu Jafar Mansoor and Abdullah Saffah made peace with him and as part of the terms he was ready to take the oath. However, Abu Muslim from Khorasan wrote to Abdullah Saffah saying, "Yazid bin Omar's existence will remain a danger you should kill him." So, Mansoor Abbasi killed him by treachery and eliminated the danger.

Now Abu Salama alone survived in Kufa and apparently, there was no excuse for murdering him because the Abbasids in the beginning did not want to oppose the supporters of Ali ؑ openly. Abu Salama's detailed record was sent to Abu Muslim in order to get his opinion. He replied back that he should be put to death at once. Reading this Abdullah Saffah at the instance of his uncle, Dawood, wrote to Abu Muslim. "If we kill him, we run the risk of open opposition and rebellion from Abu Salama's supporters and the supporters of Ali ؑ. Please send some one from there to kill Abu Salama." Abu Muslim deputed Murad bin Anas to kill Abu Salama. Murad came to Kufa and one day while Abu Salma was going somewhere, he struck him with his sword so powerfully that he immediately fell dead and Murad escaped. It was rumored that some Khwarij killed Abu Salama. After the murder, Abu Muslim similarly had Sulaiman bin Katheer killed. He is the same Sulaiman bin Katheer who had rejected Abu Muslim when he first arrived in Khorasan as Imam Ibrahim's chief deputy. In short, Abu Muslim had everybody who opposed him murdered.

### **Massacre of Banu Umayyad by Abbasids**

The nation or dynasty that claims the Islamic Caliphate as their hereditary right is suffering from a gross misunderstanding and does an injustice to themselves and the Muslims in general. If Banu Umayyah wanted to retain the Islamic rule in their own community or family, they were unjustified. If Banu Abbas or Banu Hashim took it as a matter of their right, they were also wrong and unjust. But as people in the world think unjustifiably so, they take for granted the continuation of the right of succession in government and its authority too. So, if a man snatches by force his right from a usurper, he often

takes resort to murder and violence. However, the way such murders and violence were justified by Banu Abbas in respect to Banu Umayyah, is unprecedented. Yes, if semi-historical stories are to be relied upon by going beyond the historical age, Bukht Nassar had murdered Bani Israel (children of Israel i.e., Jews) mercilessly and audaciously and wanted to end their existence on the surface of the globe. But we see that Bani Israel still survives in the world today. More than this, the Aryans in India perpetrated all kinds of atrocities on the non-Aryans but the forests of the Himalayas and the Vindhya range in northern India, and the sands of Rajasthan in northwestern India kept them covered and the Shudra community of the Hindus form a remarkable part of the Indian population even today (Shudras were non-Aryan cultivators, who came under the domination of the Aryans and in many cases were enslaved). The Aryans of India were the Iranians and Khorasanis. The Khorasani commanders of the Abbasids persuaded the Abbasids to use such violence and cruelty in killing Banu Umayyah that all other stories of atrocities pale in comparison. From the study of conspiratorial activity all over the world, it emerges that for those who want to make their conspiracy a success it is necessary to commit limitless killing, bloodshed, oppression and cruelty to instill terror in the population to eliminate opposition. In this history of Islam, we also have constantly found proof of this fact. Taking the Islamic caliphate from the family of Banu Umayyah was not a crime but to give it to another family in similar fashion was certainly not a matter of credit. Islam and the world of Islam could not have benefited from it. Therefore, Banu Abbas committed shameful deeds, bloodshed and slaughter to accomplish such a task.

A short account of the massacre resorted to by Abu Muslim, Qahtaba bin Shabeeb and other deputies in the name of the Prophet's family, in the cities of Khorasan has been given in the above pages. Imam Ibrahim had written to Abu Muslim in his last letter emphatically not to spare even a single Arabic speaker in Khorasan. He meant by that the Arab tribes in Khorasan which supported Banu Umayyah and lived there as royalty. The inhabitants of the city who were non-Muslims and could have been converted to support the Umayyachs were killed by Abu Muslim. Consequently those Arab tribes which reached Khorasan in

large numbers and were succeeding in turning the country's language and society into Arabic were all put to death and the Arabic factor which was influencing the whole country suddenly lost its power and died. That was how the Iranian language, culture, society and morality which were dying, got a new lease of life and Iran and Khorasan which could have been Arab countries like Egypt turned into Persian countries again. Abu Muslim himself was a Khorasani and Iranian by race and for him there was no job more interesting and enjoyable than killing the Arabs. National prejudice which Islam had uprooted completely emerged during the reign of Banu Umayyah again and it was through the use of this national bigotry and discrimination between tribes that Banu Umayyah had rendered all Arab tribes specifically Banu Hashim helpless. When the others knew that a certain person belonged to Banu Umayyah, they looked at him with fear. As soon as they got better of Banu Umayyah, they spent all their energy in securing themselves from this danger and fear. They made up their mind to exterminate them from the face of the earth. When Abdullah Saffah's uncle Abdullah bin Ali entered Damascus on 5 Ramadan 132 A.H., he ordered a general massacre. When the last Umayyah caliph Marwan bin Mohammad was killed in Egypt, the most important duty the Abbasids had, was the extermination of Banu Umayyah. Some Umayyads also joined Banu Abbas in pulling down the high palace of the caliphate of Banu Umayyah and lived with the victorious Abbasids with honor. So, the destruction of the seed of Banu Umayyah completely was not possible. However, Abu Muslim was prepared to undertake this task nonetheless. He wrote to Abdullah Saffah and the leaders of the Abbasids repeatedly to kill any individual of Banu Umayyah no matter how sympathetic or how much of a supporter he might be. The orders were carried out no doubt however there were some persons who in large numbers had joined the Abbasids against the Umayyah caliph and helped them in critical situations. Human propriety and nobility prevented them from killing these helpers. Abu Muslim sent bribes and instructions to the poets and courtiers who frequented the courts of the Abbasi caliphs and commanders to recite poems, and talk to incite the Abbasids against Banu Umayyah so that they would continue to hunger for revenge and murder. That resulted in driving the Abbasids to capture

and kill all the Banu Umayyah. Saffah had Sulaiman bin Hisham bin Abdul Malik killed in the open court at once after being incited by the recitation of such a poem though Sulaiman was a friend and supporter of Saffah. During the days when Abdullah bin Ali was in Palestine, he was taking a meal beside the river of Abi Fatras 80 or 90 persons of Banu Umayyah were dining with him. Meanwhile Shibl bin Abdullah arrived and he started reading poems containing the condemnation of Banu Umayyah, details of the murder of Imam Ibrahim and finally instigation to kill Banu Umayyah. Abdullah bin Ali, Abdullah Saffah's uncle at once ordered their execution. His servants began to kill them. Some of them were killed instantly while others were severely injured but still alive. Abdullah bin Ali had all the dead and wounded placed side by side and had his servants make their bodies into the dining surface for the food. Then the meal was served on top of them and he along with all his friends sat and ate. They were eating while under the food those who had not yet died were moaning, they continued eating until the injured died from their wounds. The list of the murdered included Mohamud bin Abdul Malik, Mu'izz bin Yazid, Abdul Wahid bin Sulaiman, Sayeed bin Abdul Malik, Abu Obaidah bin Waleed bin Abdul Malik. Some say that the deposed caliph Ibrahim was also among them. In Damascus, the same Abdullah bin Ali bin Abbas had the graves of the caliphs of Banu Umayyah dug up. A skull was taken out of Abdul Malik's grave. Nothing came out of Amir Muawiya's grave. Some graves produced limbs and the rest had turned into dust. When Hisham bin Abdul Malik's grave was dug up, the tip of his nose was gone otherwise his entire body was intact. Abdullah bin Ali had his dead body lashed, hung and then had it burned having the ashes blown away by the wind. Abdullah Ali's brother Sulaiman bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas killed a group of Banu Umayyah in Basra and had their dead bodies thrown on the road and forbade their burial. Dogs continued to eat them for a long time. Abdullah bin Ali's other brother, Saffah's uncle Dawood bin Ali, captured and killed every Umayyah in Makkah, Madinah and the entire Hijaz until nothing remained of Banu Umayyah. In short, all over the territory it was proclaimed that wherever a member of Banu Umayyah was found, he should be put to death at once. Just as people leave their houses to

hunt wild animals, similarly they used to go out of their houses to kill the members of Banu Umayyah until they could not find refuge in any house, village or city. The Abbasids went on searching for them and killing them for years. Abu Muslim had the job in Khorasan done more effectively and audaciously. He killed not only Banu Umayyah but also those who had ever supported Banu Umayyah or did them any service. Those who managed to escape from the general massacre went to other places, disguised themselves, changed their names and places of origin and went pass the Islamic borders.

The provinces and states of Khorasan witnessed the general massacre in its most horrible form, all the Banu Umayyah and all the tribes sympathetic to them, escaped to Sindh, Mount Sulaiman and Kashmir and took refuge there. Those who had changed the names of their tribes also crossed the Islamic borders, because they could not find peace within the jurisdiction of the Abbasids authority.

It is said that the descendants of these runaway Arab tribes who came to Sindh, Kashmir, and the Punjab are still to be found in India unaware of their Arab blood because their ancestors had changed their names and professions.

One person from among the Banu Umayyah, Abdur Rahman bin Muawiya bin Hisham, escaped from becoming the prey of the Abbasids. He arrived in Spain via Egypt and Qairwan. As Spain was comparatively free from the influence of the Abbasids and the supporters of Banu Umayyah were found in large numbers there, he occupied it immediately after his arrival and founded a separate rule and caliphate, which the Abbasid caliphs always viewed with envy yet were unable to harm it.

### Chapter 3

## **The Caliphate of the Abbasids** (First Phase)

### **Abul Abbas saffah**

Abul Abbas Abdullah Saffah bin Mohammad bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib bin Hashim was born and raised at Hamimah in Balqa area in 104 A.H. He succeeded his brother. He was younger than his brother Mansoor. Ibn Jareer says one day the Prophet ﷺ said to his uncle Abbas ؓ, "The Caliphate will come to your descendants", the descendents of Abbas were looking forward to it ever since that time.

Abdullah Saffah enjoyed distinction in his ability to cause bloodshed, competitive generosity and intelligence. His Governors and Officials were also experts at spilling blood. Saffah first deputed his uncle Dawood as Governor of Kufa and then made him the Amir of the Hijaz, Yemen and Yamama and appointed his nephew Isa bin Musa bin Mohammad as Governor of Kufa.

When Abu Dawood died in 133 A.H., Saffah made his maternal uncle Yazid bin Obaidullah bin Abdul Madan Harthi and his cousin Mohammad bin Yazid bin Obaidullah bin Abdul Madan the Governors

of Hijaz plus Yamama and Yemen respectively. In 132 A.H., Sufyan bin Uyaina Halbi was made the administrator of Basra and then in 133 A.H., he was deposed and this office was given to Saffah's uncle Sulaiman bin Ali and the Sultanate of Bahrain and Oman were also annexed to his territory. In 132 A.H. Saffah's uncle Ismail bin Ali, another uncle Abdullah bin Ali, Abu Aun Abdul Malik bin Yazid and Abu Muslim Khorasani were Governors of Ahwaz, Syria, Egypt and Khorasan with Jaba! respectively. Khalid bin Barmak was the Revenue Officer in Khorasan. In 133 A.H., Abu Muslim appointed Mohammad bin Ash'ath the Governor of Persia on his own. At the same time, Saffah sent his uncle Isa bin Ali with the certificate of Governorship for Persia. Muhammad bin Ash'ath had already been installed there. When Isa bin Ali reached there, Muhammad bin Ash'ath refused to hand over the government of Persia to him and then took a promise from him that he would not deliver the Friday sermon from the pulpit and not to take up sword except to declare *Jihad*, then he handed over the authority of Persia to him but in fact, he himself remained the ruler. When Mohammad Ash'ath died, Saffah sent his uncle Ismail bin Ali as the Governor of Persia. Then he sent Mohammad bin Sool as the Governor of Mousil. The citizens of Mousil expelled Mohammad bin Sool.

They were against Banu Abbas. Getting angry Saffah sent his brother Yahya bin Mohammad bin Ali with 12,000 warriors. Yahya reached Mousil and stayed at the Governor's headquarters and sent for the leaders of Mousil and had them all killed through treachery. The inhabitants of Mousil were highly agitated because of this. They prepared themselves to fight. Yahya made a proclamation, saying, "Whosoever enters the Central Mosque will be granted pardon. Hearing it, they rushed towards the Central Mosque.

Yahya had his men standing guard at the doors of the Central Mosque. Who ever entered it was killed. In this way, 11,000 people were killed. Then a general massacre was ordered in the city. When it was night, Yahya heard the lamentations of the women whose husbands, fathers, brothers and sons were unjustly killed. In the morning, he ordered even the women and children to be put to death. For three days in succession, the killing of the citizens was declared to be legal. With this declaration, the massacre in the city was



enjoined with greater ferocity.

There were 4000 black soldiers in Yahya's army. During the slaughter, they turned to raping the women. Thousands of women were kidnapped. On the fourth day, Yahya came into the city on horse back for inspection. A woman gathered her courage and caught hold of the reins of his horse and said, "Are you not of Banu Hashim? Are you not the son of the Prophet's uncle? Don't you know that the black soldiers have married the Muslim women by force?" Yahya did not answer and went away. The next day, he sent for all the black soldiers to disburse their salaries and when all of them had assembled, he ordered them to be killed.

When Saffah was informed of this, he sent Ismail bin Ali to Mousil and transferred Yahya to Persia. In 133 A.H., the Roman Emperor took Maltiya and Qaliqala from the Muslims by force. The same year Yazid bin Obaidullah bin Abdul Madan gave an army to Ibrahim bin Hibban Sulami and sent him from Madinah to Yamama where Muthanna bin Yazid bin Omer bin Hubairah had been in power since his father's time. He fought Ibrahim and was killed. The same year Shareek bin Shaikh Mehri in Bukhara revolted and gathered 30,000 men. Abu Muslim sent Zeyad bin Saleh Khazai against Shareek who fought and was killed. Abu Muslim sent Abu Dawood Khalid bin Ibrahim to invade the city of Khatal in 133 A.H. Habsh bin Shibl, the king of Khatal, suffered defeat and escaped to China via Farghana in eastern Uzbekistan. The same year saw the war between the kings of Akhsheed, Farghana and Shash. The Chinese king intervened and sent one hundred thousand man army against them. Abu Muslim sent Zeyad bin Saleh to meet it. The clash with the Chinese army took place along the river of Taraz 50,000 Chinese were killed and 20,000 were captured by the Muslims.

In 134 A.H. Bassam bin Ibrahim Bassam, a Khorasani Commander of repute, occupied Madain. Saffah sent Khazim bin Khizaima to confront Bassam who lost and escaped. Then Saffah sent Khazim to Oman to face the Khwarij. He defeated them and killed their chief. The same year Abu Dawood Khalid bin Ibrahim invaded Kush, killed its king who was a Dhimmi (Protected non-Muslim subject, this indicates the treachery of Abu Muslim) and sent his head to Abu

Muslim in Samarkand. He enthroned the king's brother Tazan and returned to Balkh. At the same time he massacred the civilians of Bukhara and after making Zeyad bin Saleh the ruler of Bukhara and Samarkand and ordering the construction of fortifications for Samarkand, he came back to Merv. After these happenings, Saffah got the news that Mansoor bin Jamhoor had committed a breach of trust and revolted. Mansoor bin Jamhoor had been the Governor of Iraq and Khorasan for two months during the reign of Yazid the Reducer. He was one of the companions of Abdullah bin Muawiya bin Abdullah bin Jafar. When Abdullah bin Muawiya was defeated by Dawood bin Yazid bin Umar bin Hubairah and Ma'an bin Zaidah near Astakhar, Mansoor bin Jamhoor had fled to Sindh. Abdullah bin Muawiya reached Herat where he was killed by its Governor Malik bin Haithan Khazi by order of Abu Muslim as related previously. Saffah sent his commander of the police Musa bin Kab to Sindh and deputed Musayab bin Zuhair in his place. Musa and Mansoor clashed along the Indian border. Mansoor had 12,000 fighters but was defeated. He escaped to the desert and died of thirst there. Mansoor's Governor who was in Sindh marched towards the city of Khizr along with the members of his family and belongings. That same year in Dhul Hijja 134 A.H., Saffah visited Ambar and made it his capital.

In 135 A.H. Zeyad bin Saleh, Abu Muslim's Governor of Samarkand and Bukhara, rebelled against him. Abu Muslim left Merv. Abu Dawood Khalid bin Ibrahim, upon receiving this news, sent Nasr bin Rashid to Tirmiz (city in southern Uzbekistan) to protect it from Zeyad. As soon as he reached there, some persons came from Talqan (Iran bordering the Caspian Sea in the north) and killed him. Abu Dawood then sent Isa bin Mahan to pursue Nasr's killers. Isa punished Nasr's murderers. Meanwhile Abu Muslim arrived at Amad. He was accompanied by Saba bin Noman Azdi. The caliph Saffah entrusted the task of murdering Abu Muslim to Zeyad bin Saleh and Saba bin Noman.

After his arrival at Amad, Abu Muslim somehow came to know about the plot. He at once arrested Saba and giving orders to the Governor to kill him, left for Bukhara. On the way, he came across some of Zeyad bin Saleh's commanders who rebelled against him and were

coming to join Abu Muslim. When Abu Muslim reached Bukhara, Zeyad hid himself in a local man's house. The local man killed him and presented his head to Abu Muslim. Abu Muslim informed Abu Dawood of Zeyad's death. Abu Dawood was engaged at the time on the expedition at Talqan. After becoming free from this expedition, he returned to Kush and Isa bin Mahan went to Bassam but without much success. That same year Isa bin Mahan had sent a few letters to Abu Muslims' companions criticizing Abu Dawood. Abu Muslim sent those letters to Abu Dawood. Abu Dawood had Isa beaten up and thrown into captivity. When he was released after a few days, the soldiers mobbed and killed him. Relieved of this situation, Abu Muslim returned to Merv.

In 136 A.H., Abdullah bin Ali called on Saffah. He sent him, along with the troops of Syria and Iraq, to fight the Romans. Saffah's brother Abu Jafar Mansoor was the administrator of Jazirah. He made up his mind to perform Hajj at Saffah's instance submitted a petition of request asking his permission. Saffah wrote to him, "Come to me and I shall send you as Amir al-Hajj (leader of the pilgrimage). So, Mansoor came to Ambâr and Muqatil bin Hakeem was assigned to Harran. The fact was that Abu Muslim had also sought Saffah's permission to do Hajj. So, he secretly informed his own brother Mansoor to get ready for Hajj and send a petition stating his request to come to Hajj, as all governors were required to do. It is essential to clarify here that Abu Muslim Khorasani contributed the most to making the propagation of the Abbasids a success as the previous events have shown. Now following Saffah's accession to the caliphate and the strengthening of the authority of the Abbasids, he was made the governor of Khorasan and Saffah had sent him the certificate of governorship in his name. However, Abu Muslim never came to the court in person to take the oath. When, on behalf of Imam Ibrahim, he was first sent to Khorasan, he had been living there ever since. He himself conquered Khorasan, established his government there and dominated over its rule. When all the enemies were removed, Abdullah bin Saffah thought that it was best not to transfer Abu Muslim to any other government of the province nor could he reduce his power.

Abu Muslim considered himself to be the founder of the caliphate of the

Abbasids and the patron of caliph Saffah. Caliph Saffah consulted him and often acted accordingly but regarding Khorasan, he did not think it necessary to consult Saffah. Sulaiman bin Katheer was one of the most famous and oldest of the deputies of the Abbasids. Abu Muslim killed him on personal grounds and Saffah could not ask him to explain. Saffah, his uncle and his brother kept overlooking these excesses but found it difficult to tolerate Abu Muslim's autocratic method of ruling. When Saffah sent his brother Abu Jafar Mansoor to Khorasan to take the oath on his behalf and with the certificate of Abu Muslim's governorship, Abu Muslim's attitude to Abu Jafar was not courteous and Abu Jafar felt that all his activities reflected self-conceit and autocracy. That led to an estrangement between the two and when Abu Jafar briefed Saffah with all that transpired, Caliph Saffah was all the more concerned and began to think of ways to reduce Abu Muslim's authority and influence. He finally decided to do away with him. That was the reasoning behind why he assigned that job to Zeyad bin Saleh and Saba bin Noman Azdi as mentioned earlier. In short, they harbored ill feelings and suspicion in their hearts against each other."

As Abu Muslim was highly courageous and a man who loved power when he suspected Saffah, he not only thought it necessary to keep his hold and authority in Khorasan but he also tried to establish his influence in Hijaz and Iraq in order to crush the Abbasids, if necessary. It was not surprising that he was preparing to enhance his popularity in Hijaz, Iraq and all over the Islamic world covertly. He had contributed most to make the propagation of the Abbasids a success but he forgot the fact that his adversary was the family, which could produce persons like Mohammad bin Ali and Ibrahim bin Mohammad, the founders of the Abbasid movement and they had the ability to ruin the caliphate of Banu Umayyah. Though Abu Muslim contributed to it most, he was after all taught and trained by the Abbasids. He sought permission from Caliph Saffah to perform the Hajj, Saffah permitted him and instructed him that he should not take more than 500 people with him. Abu Muslim wrote back, "There are people who are against me. My life would be in danger if I travel with such a small number." Saffah wrote, "1000 then should be sufficient for you. Travelling with a large number of people is inconvenient because managing supplies in Makkah might

prove to be difficult." Abu Muslim left Merv with 8,000 men and when he approached the border of Khorasan, he left 7,000 men there and moved towards the capital Ambar with 1000 men. Saffah sent well known and respected commanders to receive him. Saffah honored him royally when he visited the court and said to him, "If my brother Abu Jafar Mansoor had not intended to perform Hajj, I would have made you the leader of the pilgrimage, Amir al-Hajj. Thus, his wish to be the Amir al-Hajj and increase his popularity was thwarted. Abu Jafar Mansoor and Abu Muslim both left Ambar for Hajj together. Abu Muslim had left Khorasan with a big treasure and he did not like Mansoor's company because he could not do things, which he wanted to do freely. Nevertheless, he had wells dug to supply water at every stage of the journey. He started the work of building inns and making more amenities available to the travelers. He distributed clothes, set up welfare houses, gave away many awards and showed his generosity with gifts, which endeared him to the masses. In Makkah, he performed the same acts of generosity on a larger scale where people from all over the world could witness his kindness. Before Abu Jafar decided to leave Makkah at the end of the Hajj, Abu Muslim had left already. Abu Muslim had hardly journeyed two stages when he came across the messenger from the capital Ambār who carried the news of Saffah's death and Abu Jafar Mansoor's succession to the caliphate. The messenger was on way to Abu Jafar Mansoor. Abu Muslim kept the messenger with him for two days and then let him go to Mansoor. Abu Jafar Mansoor was unhappy at Abu Muslim's departure before the proper time. Now he was even more unhappy at the news including the messengers delay, Abu Muslim did not congratulate him on his becoming the caliph nor did he remain encamped to take the oath and continue the journey together although he was expected to so. When Abu Jafar received the news, he left Makkah but Abu Muslim kept moving on until he reached Ambār and after him Mansoor entered the capital.

Abul Abbas Abdullah Saffah lived as caliph for four years and eight months and died on 13 Dhul Hijjah 136 A.H. His uncle Isa led the funeral service and he was buried at Ambār. Before dying, he had written a testament that Abu Jafar Mansoor and after him, Isa bin Mūsā would be caliph. He rolled it in a cloth and put the seal of the

Prophet's family on it and gave it to Isa. Since Mansoor was absent, Isa bin Musa took the oath from the people as his deputy and sent the messenger to Makkah to inform Abu Jafar Mansoor.

Abdullah Saffah made use of money to establish and strengthen his caliphate in the same way in which the founder of the caliphate of Banu Umayyah Amir Muawiya \* had done. Amir Muawiya \* had stopped public opposition and support of his opponents the Alawiites with generosity and succeeded in winning their favor. Similarly, the Alawiites were claimants for the caliphate against the founder of the Abbasids, Saffah. They ruined Banu Umayyah in collision with the Abbasids and once again were disappointed when the caliphate went to Banu Abbas. Abdullah Saffah also gave large sums to the Alawiites as Amir Muawiya \* had done. When Saffah was made caliph, Abdullah bin Hasan Muthanna bin Hasan bin Ali and other Alawiites came to Kufa and accused them of usurping the caliphate to which they were entitled. This is the same Abdullah bin Hasan Muthanna whose son Mohammad was chosen caliph by the Abbasids and the Alawiites at the meeting in the month of Dhul Hijjah in 131 A.H. All the people present at that meeting including Abu Jafar Mansoor had taken the oath for him. Saffah presented one million dirhams to Abdullah bin Hasan Muthanna though the amount was not available with him at the time. He had borrowed it from Ibn Muqrin. In the same way, he gave money to each Alawiite and let them go on their way. Abdullah bin Hasan Muthanna had hardly left Saffah when a messenger arrived with the news of Marwan bin Mohammad's death with a large amount of precious jewels and ornaments as spoils of war. Saffah immediately ordered the messenger to take all the jewels and ornaments and sell them. A trader purchased them from him for 80,000 dinars. If Abdullah bin Saffah had neglected payment to the Alawiites they would have surely stood up against him and most of the influential deputies might have joined them making the saving of their caliphate extremely difficult for the Abbasids. Saffah's greatest achievement lies in the fact that he silenced all the Alawiites with his money and did not let them stand against him. Immediately after Saffah's death, the Alawiites prepared to revolt but by then the caliphate of the Abbasids had become very powerful.

### **Abu Jafar Mansoor**

Abu Jafar Mansoor Abdullah bin Mohammad bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib's mother Salameh was a Berber slave girl. He was born in 95 A.H. while his grandfather was still alive. According to another narrative, he was born in 101 A.H. He was known for his bravery, pride, ability to instill awe, intelligence and particular point of view. He abhorred sports and fun. He was a great scholar of literature and the science of applying Islamic law. He imprisoned Imam Abu Hanifa where he died for his refusal to accept the post of chief justice. Some say that Abu Hanifa delivered an authorized legal opinion for bearing arms against Mansoor and Mansoor had him poisoned to death. Mansoor was a very eloquent orator. He is accused of greed and miserliness. Abdur Rahman bin Muawiya bin Hisham bin Abdul Malik Umayyah had become the ruler of Spain in 138 A.H., during the reign of Mansoor's caliphate. Since Mansoor was born of a Berber woman, it was said that the Islamic rule had become part Berber. Ibn Asakir writes that when Mansoor was wandering through out the Islamic territories in pursuit of knowledge, he arrived at a place where the guards demanded two dirhams as tax from him and said, "Unless you pay the tax, you will not be allowed to stay here." Mansoor said, "I belong to Banu Hashim. Excuse me. I am one of the sons of the Prophet's uncle." Even then, they did not allow him. Mansoor said, "I know the Qur'an. Excuse me." Again, they did not budge. Mansoor said, "I am a scholar of Islamic law and the religious obligations." Again, the guard looked adamant. At last, Mansoor had to part with two dirhams and on that day, he made up his mind to accumulate wealth. Once he instructed his son Mahdi saying, "A king cannot live without the obedience of the subjects and the subjects cannot obey without justice. The best man is he who despite being powerful forgives and the greatest fool is he who does injustice and oppression. Orders must not be passed without deliberation for deliberation is a mirror in which a man observes his own beauty and ugliness. Always be thankful for Allah's gifts and blessings, forgive as much as possible, expect obedience through encouragement and be humble and kind in victory.



## **The Revolt of Abdullah bin Ali**

Abdullah Saffah had sent Mansoor's uncle Abdullah bin Ali to Saifah with the Khorasani and Syrian armies before his death. In Muharram 137 A.H., Mansoor reached Ambâr and became caliph. Isa bin Musa had informed Abdullah bin Ali about Saffah's death and had written that Saffah had left a will making Mansoor caliph after him. Abdullah bin Ali assembled the people and said to them, "When Saffah wanted to send the army on the Harran expedition, none dared to accept it. Then he said that whoever went there, would be caliph after him. Therefore, I went on that expedition and it was I who defeated Marwan bin Mohammad and the other Umayyah leaders." All confirmed his statement and took the oath at his hands. Then Abdullah bin Ali returned from Dalook, and besieged Muqatil bin Hakeem at Harran. He continued with the siege for forty days. During the siege, he became suspicious of the Khorasani men and killed several of them. He deputed Humaid bin Qahtaba as the governor of Halab and gave him a letter in the name of Zafar bin Asim, the governor of Halab and then left. The letter said that as soon as Humaid arrived he should be put to death. Humaid opened and read it on the way and turned to Iraq instead of Halab. When Mansoor arrived in Ambâr, Abu Muslim had already arrived there. Abu Muslim took the oath at Mansoor's hands and Mansoor treated him with great respect and praise. Meanwhile the news came that Abdullah bin Ali had rebelled. Mansoor said to Abu Muslim, "I apprehend great danger from Abdullah bin Ali." Abu Muslim loved such adventures. He got ready at once in order to oblige Mansoor. He was deputed to fight against Abdullah bin Ali. Ibn Qahtaba, who coming to Iraq was displeased with Abdullah bin Ali, joined Abu Muslim. Abdullah bin Ali gave a pardon to Muqatil bin Hakeem and he surrendered Harran to Abdullah bin Ali. He sent Muqatil to Uthman bin Abdul Aala, the governor of Rakka, with a letter. Uthman killed him as soon as he reached him and arrested both his sons. After seeing, Abu Muslim had off, Mansoor sent for Mohammad bin Sul from Azerbaijan and dispatched him to deceive Abdullah bin Ali with a fabricated story. Mohammad bin Sul called on Abdullah bin Ali and said to him, "I have heard Saffah say that after his death his successor



would be his uncle Abdullah." Abdullah bin Ali said, "You are a liar and I understand your fraud." Saying this he chopped off his head. Then he left Harran and stayed at Nasiban where he dug trenches and made fortifications. Before sending Abu Muslim, Mansoor had already written to Hasan bin Qahtaba, the governor of Armenia, to come and join Abu Muslim and he joined him at Mousil. When Abu Muslim and his army arrived at Nasiban, he camped in the direction of Syria and made it known that he had nothing to do with Abdullah bin Ali and that he had been made the governor of Syria and was on his way there. Abdullah bin Ali's men who were Syrians were nervous when they heard this. They said to Abdullah bin Ali, "Our families will come under the wheel of his tyranny. We better stop him from going to Syria." Abdullah bin Ali tried his utmost to argue with them that Abu Muslim had come to fight with them and that he would not go to Syria but no one believed him. At last, he left the camp and was on the way to Syria when Abu Muslim at once shifted to Abdullah bin Ali's camp which was more strategically located and Abdullah bin Ali had to camp where Abu Muslim had been camped. Thus, Abu Muslim secured a more strategic position. Then both the armies clashed, which continued for several months. Finally, on Wednesday 7 Jumad-al-Thani 137 A.H. Abdullah bin Ali was defeated and Abu Muslim was victorious, he immediately sent the news to Mansoor. Abdullah bin Ali fled and took refuge with his brother Sulaiman bin Ali in Basra and remained there in hiding.

### **Death of Abu Muslim**

When Mansoor heard that Abdullah bin Ali was defeated and Abu Muslim looted his camp and took a large amount of spoils of war, he sent his servant Abu Khaseeb to record the valuables. Abu Muslim was annoyed that Mansoor did not rely upon him and sent his own men for the purpose of accounting. When Mansoor was informed of Abu Muslim's displeasure, he felt concerned that he might go to Khorasan. So, he wrote a certificate of governorship of Syria and Egypt in Abu Muslim's name and sent it to him. Abu Muslim was aggrieved from this even more and he thought that he was being separated from Khorasan in order to make him helpless and powerless. So, he left Jazirah and went to Khorasan. When he found

out about Abu Muslim's movement, Mansoor left Ambâr and went to Madain and sent for him. Abu Muslim refused to come to him, saying, "I shall obey you from a distance. I have subdued all your enemies. Now that all your dangers are over you do not need me. If you leave me alone, I shall keep obeying you and shall remain committed to my oath. But if you pursue me, I shall announce the cancellation of the oath and oppose you." After going through the letter Mansoor wrote to Abu Muslim very softly and affectionately, "I have no doubts about your loyalty and obedience. You are very efficient and worthy of reward. The devil has poured poison of suspicion into your heart. Purge yourself of all these suspicions and temptations and come over to me." Mansoor dispatched the letter through his liberated slave Abu Humaid and instructed him to induce and entreat him to visit Mansoor and threaten him with Mansoor's anger in case of refusal. When the letter reached him, he consulted Malik bin Haitham. He said, "Don't go to Mansoor. He will kill you." But Mansoor had already persuaded Abu Dawood Khalid bin Ibrahim in exchange for the governorship of Khorasan to convince Abu Muslim to come to him at any cost. Due to Abu Dawood's advice Abu Muslim prepared himself to go to Mansoor. Despite this he took precautions by first sending his minister Abu Ishaq Khalid bin Uthman to Mansoor to get more acquainted with the conditions and situation there. Abu Muslim had a deep trust in Abu Ishaq. When he reached the caliph's court, all the leaders of Banu Hashim and noblemen of the court came to receive him. Mansoor treated him with great respect and love and won his heart with his soft speech, then he said to him, "Prevent Abu Muslim from going to Khorasan and convince him to come to me. In exchange I shall give you the governorship of Khorasan." Abu Ishaq yielded. He came to Abu Muslim and persuaded him to visit Mansoor. So, he left his army under the command of Malik bin Haitham at Halwan and with 3,000 men moved to Madain. When he reached Madain, a man visited him at Mansoor's instance and said to him, "Please recommend me to Mansoor and ask him to give me the governorship of Kaskar (in the Northwest Frontier Province of present day Pakistan). Also, Mansoor is very displeased with his minister Abu Ayyub. Please say a few words in his favor." Abu Muslim was pleased to oblige him and all doubts about danger that he harbored in

his heart vanished. He entered the court with honor and went back to his resting place with equal honor. When he visited the court the next day, Mansoor had already hidden Uthman bin Naheek, Shabeeb bin Rawah, Harb bin Qais and others, behind a veil and instructed them that when he clapped, they should come out and kill him. Abu Muslim came to the court and Caliph Mansoor in the course of conversation inquired of him about the two swords he had taken from Abdullah bin Ali. Abu Muslim had one of those two swords at his side. He at once handed it over to Mansoor. He kept looking at it for a while and then he put it under his thigh and began to complain to Abu Muslim about his actions then he mentioned the death of Sulaiman bin Katheer and said to him, "Why did you kill him though he has been loyal to me since before you had joined this work." First Abu Muslim offered excuses in a humble and flattering manner but when he found that Mansoor's rage was rising moment by moment and that he was no longer secure he courageously answered, "Do what you may. I fear none except Allāh." Mansoor abused Abu Muslim and clapped his hands. On hearing the clapping Uthman bin Naheek and the others came out and killed him.

This occurred in 25 SHibban 137 A.H. After Abu Muslim's death, the minister went out and sent back Abu Muslim's men saying, "Your Amir will remain with the Amir al-Muminin at present. You may go back." Then Isa bin Musa came to the caliph's court and inquired about Abu Muslim. When he understood he was dead, he exclaimed *إنا لله وانا إليه راجعون*. This touched Mansoor and he said, "No one was a greater enemy to you than Abu Muslim." Then Mansoor sent for Jafar bin Hanzla and consulted him about killing Abu Muslim. Jafar advised him to kill him and Mansoor said, "May Allāh give you a good reward!" and then pointed to the dead body of Abu Muslim. As soon as he saw it he said, "Amir al-Muminin you are caliph with effect from today." Mansoor simply smiled and kept quite.

Abu Nasr Malik bin Haitham to whom Abu Muslim had handed over his wealth, left Halwan and was on his way to Khorasan planning on going to Hamadan. Then he came back to Mansoor. Mansoor reprimanded him, saying, "You advised Abu Muslim not to come to me." He said, "As long as I was with him, I gave advice. Now that I

have come to you, I shall keep trying to do good for you." Mansoor sent him as the ruler of Mousil.

### **The Revolt of Sinbād**

After becoming free from the matter of Abu Muslim, Mansoor obviously could relax to some degree but even after that, he had to face many difficulties. Among Abu Muslim's men there was a Zoroastrian named Firoz who was popularly known as Sinbād. He had converted Islam and joined Abu Muslim's army. Following Abu Muslim's murder, he rose up and demanded compensation for his murder. The inhabitants of mountain area supported him. He conquered Nishapur and Rayy and took possession of all the money and provisions that Abu Muslim had left there. He looted the people's wealth and goods and made them slaves. Then he turned apostate and announced that he was going to pull down the Ka'bah. For the new Iranian Muslims this much instigation was sufficient and those who knew nothing about Islam saw one of their countrymen revolt against the Islamic authority and they joined him. When Mansoor was informed of this new evil, he sent Jamhoo bin Murar Ajli to punish Sinbad. They clashed at a place between Hamadan and Rayy. Jamhoo defeated Sinbad and about 7,000 of Sinbad's men lost their lives. Sinbad fled and took refuge in Tabristan. A servant of the governor of Tabristan killed him. Mansoor wrote to the governor of Tabristan to send Sinbad's wealth and goods but he refused. Mansoor then sent an army to discipline him. He fled from Tabristan and went to Dailam. When Jamhoo had defeated Sinbad, he captured most of his goods and all his treasure and Abu Muslim's treasure also came under his possession. He did not send it to Mansoor. He went to Rayy, entered the fort and announced his cancellation of his oath to Mansoor and rebelled against him. Mansoor sent Mohammad bin Ash'th to fight against him. Jamhoo left Rayy and went to Isfahan. Jamhoo conquered Isfahan and Mohammad bin Ash'th occupied Rayy. Then Mohammad invaded Isfahan. Jamhoo fought but lost after a pitched battle and fled to Azerbaijan. A friend of Jamhoo's killed him and sent his head to Mansoor. This happened in 138 A.H.

In 139 A.H., Mansoor deposed his uncle Sulaiman from the

governorship of Basra and recalled him. He wrote to him to bring Abdullah bin Ali (who after losing to Abu Muslim, had gone to his brother Sulaiman in Basra) with him by giving him a pardon. When he brought Abdullah bin Ali to court, Mansoor imprisoned him and later on killed him.

### **The sect of Rāvindiyeḥ**

Ravandiyeh is considered as one of the sects of the Shiites. It was in fact a sect consisting of the ignorant people of Iran and Khorasan, which lived in Ravand. It originated from recruits of Abu Muslim's army. The sect, which he had made, had nothing to do with religion and they were always guided by political considerations. The Ravandiyeh believed in transmigration and embodiment. They believed that Mansoor was the embodiment of Allāh. So they took him to be Allāh and to obtain a sight of him amounted to worship. It was their belief that Adam's soul entered Uthman bin Naheek's body and the angel Gabriel's soul entered Haitham bin Muawiya's body. They visited the capital and made public their faith and deeds. Mansoor caught 200 of them besides those, there were 500 or 600 more. They reacted to the arrest of their co-religionists, stormed the jail and freed their brethren. Then they besieged Mansoor's palace. It is really surprising that they considered Mansoor to be their god and yet they were ready to fight with him. It is worth recording here that among Yazid bin Hubairah's friends Ma'an bin Zaidah was still alive. And when Ibn Hubairah fought with the Abbasids, Ma'an bin Zaidah was among his leaders. Ma'an bin Zaidah went into hiding in the capital of Hashimites after Ibn Hubairah's defeat, Mansoor had been searching for him and wanted to have him arrested and killed. When the Ravandiyehs surrounded Mansoor's palace, Mansoor came out on foot. He started attacking and removing them although he had only a small number of men with him. In the capital there was no army or other power to match the rioters' strength. It was a very critical moment for Mansoor. He was on the point of losing the capital, the caliphate and his life and opening the way for occupation by the Ravandiyahs. Ma'an bin Zaidah, taking advantage of the situation, came to his defense unhesitatingly and fell upon the rioters. Meanwhile others also rallied around Mansoor but it was Ma'an bin

Zaidah's attacks that proved most effective. Mansoor watched with his own eyes the heroic deeds of the stranger. At last, Ma'an bin Zaidah himself began to command the men that ultimately led to the defeat of the rioters. Other civilians also rose in support of Mansoor and did away with all the rioters. After the battle, Mansoor made inquiries about the stranger who had done the most to stamp out the evil disorder. He was informed that it was none other than Ma'an bin Zaidah. He granted him pardon excused his past crimes and promoted him to a higher rank.

Abu Dawood Khalid bin Ibrahim Dhahli was the administrator of Balkh and the new governor of Khorasan. In 140 A.H. a rebellion broke out in his army and the soldiers surrounded his house. He climbed on the roof to have a look at the rebels. He slipped, fell and died the same day. After that his commander Hosam put down the rebellion, took over the reign of Khorasan and informed Mansoor who sent Abdul Jabbar bin Abdur Rahman as the governor of Khorasan.

### **Abdul Jabbar's Revolt and Death**

Immediately after taking over the reign of Khorasan, Abdul Jabbar began to depose, humiliate and kill Abu Dawood's administrators. He created a commotion in the country by slaying his leaders on the slightest suspicions. Mansoor found out that Abdul Jabbar was killing the supporters of the Abbasids but he was hesitant how to make Abdul Jabbar leave Khorasan for he feared he might revolt against him. At last, Mansoor wrote to him, "Send the majority of the army for jihad against the Romans." The purpose was quite obvious. When a greater portion of the army was separated from Khorasan, it would be quite easy to depose and replace him with another man. Abdul Jabbar wrote back in reply, "The Turks have begun to attack. If you shift the army to any other place than Khorasan, I am afraid, Khorasan will go out of our hands." At the receipt of the reply Mansoor wrote to him, "I love Khorasan most. It is very essential to protect it. If the Turks have started invading, I will send a huge army for its defense. Don't worry about it." Seeing the letter, Abdul Jabbar immediately sent the reply, "The revenue of Khorasan can not stand such a major expense. Please don't send any large army." This reply convinced Mansoor that Abdul

Jabbar was bent upon revolt. So immediately he sent a large army under the command of his son Mahdi. Mahdi arrived at Rayy and asked Khazim bin Khuzaima to go ahead and fight with Abdul Jabbar. There was a fierce battle resulting in Abdul Jabbar's defeat and flight. Mahshar bin Muzahim captured and presented him to Khazim bin Khuzaima who, in turn, made him put on a woolen gown and sit on a camel with his face towards its tail and after making a public display of him, sent him and all his men to Mansoor. Mansoor jailed them and in 142 A.H. ordered Abdul Jabbar's hands and feet to be cut off. After defeating Abdul Jabbar, Mahdi took over the reign of Khorasan and continued in the capacity of its governor until 149 A.H.

### **Uyainah bin Musa bin Kāb**

Musa bin Kāb was the administrator of Sindh and after him his son Uyaimah succeeded him as the governor of Sindh. He revolted against Mansoor. When Mansoor found out, he left the capital and went to Basra, and from there he gave the certificate of the governorship of Sindh and India to Omar bin Hafs bin Abi Safwah Atki and appointed him for the expedition against Uyaimah. Omar bin Hafs arrived in Sindh and declared war against Uyaimah and ultimately captured Sindh in 142 A.H. In the meantime, the administrator of Tabristan also rebelled. Khazim bin Khuzaima and Ruh bin Hātim were sent there. They conquered it and its administrator, a new Iranian Muslim, committed suicide.

### **The arrest and captivity of the Alawiites**

It has already been mentioned that during the end of the caliphate of Banu Umayyah an assembly was held in Makkah which discussed the nomination and election of the new caliph. Mansoor who was also present there voted for Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Hasan Muthanna bin Hasan bin Ali. All were unanimous on this point and took the oath at Mohammad bin Abdullah's hands. Mansoor also took the oath for him. Saffah kept the Alawiites quiet during his reign by giving them gifts and cash and thus preventing them from revolting. When Mansoor took over as caliph, he did not let the generosity of Saffah's times continue and constantly thought of Mohammad bin



Abdullah. Mohammad bin Abdullah's father Abdullah bin Hasan has also found mention above. He visited Saffah who gave him a large sum of money and sent him away. When Mansoor became caliph, Abdullah bin Hasan hid his sons Mohammad and Ibrahim so that Mansoor would not kill them. Mohammad bin Abdullah who Mansoor took the oath for was also known as Mohammad Mahdi. He will be referred to in the following as Mohammad Mahdi. When Mansoor went on Hajj in 136 A.H. and heard the news of Saffah's death, he first made queries about Mohammad Mahdi. He was not present there at the time. The people were suspicious of him and so he and his brother Ibrahim went into hiding. After becoming caliph, Mansoor always was trying to find out where he was. He made so many inquiries about him that everybody knew that he wanted Mohammad Mahdi badly. When Abdullah bin Hasan Muthanna was pressurized to make his sons appear, he consulted Mansoor's uncle Sulaiman bin Ali. Sulaiman said that if Mansoor had been accustomed to granting forgiveness, he would have forgiven his uncle and he would not have let atrocities be perpetrated upon him. Hearing this Abdullah bin Hasan became all the more careful in keeping his sons in hiding. At last, Mansoor spread his spies throughout the Hijaz and had fake letters sent to Abdullah bin Hasan in order to find out Mohammad Mahdi's whereabouts. Mohammad Mahdi and his brother Ibrahim continued, to remain in hiding in the Hijaz. Mansoor went for Hajj but was actually looking for them. Both brothers left the Hijaz and went to Basra and stayed with Banu Rahib and Banu Murrah. When Mansoor found out about that, he went to Basra immediately. However, they had left Basra before he arrived there. From Basra, they went to Aden and Mansoor left for the capital. When the two brothers could not find peace even in Aden, they went to Sindh. After living for a short time in Sindh, they went to Kufa and started hiding again. Afterwards, they went to Madinah. Mansoor again went to Hajj in 140 A.H. The two brothers also visited Makkah for Hajj. Ibrahim wanted to kill Mansoor but his brother Mohammad Mahdi forbade him to do so. This time Mansoor failed to find them again. He called their father to him and forced him to bring them into his presence. When he expressed his ignorance of where they were, Mansoor wanted to imprison him but on the guarantee of the



administrator of Madinah, Zeyad, he was let off. Because Zeyad made the guarantee for him, Mansoor came to harbor ill feelings against him also. After coming to the capital he appointed Mohammad bin Khalid bin Abdullah Qasri as the administrator of Madinah and brought Zeyad and his friends back to the capital and arrested them and put them into prison. After taking over as the administrator of Madinah, Mohammad bin Khalid tried his best to find Mohammad Mahdi and spent all the money of the treasury on it. Mansoor deposed Mohammad bin Khalid for his extravagance and failure and replaced him with Rabah bin Uthman bin Hayyan Muzani. Rabah reached Madinah and harassed Abdullah bin Hasan and created a great commotion there and arrested and imprisoned the following Alawiites.

1. Abdullah bin Hasan Muthanna bin Ali ❦ (Mohammad Mahdi's father)
2. Ibrahim bin Hasan Muthanna bin Hasan bin Ali ❦ (Mohammad Mahdi's uncle)
3. Jafar bin Hasan Muthanna bin Hasan bin Ali ❦ (Mohammad Mahdi's uncle)
4. Sulaiman bin Dawood bin Hasan Muthanna bin Hasan bin Ali ❦ (Mohammad Mahdi's cousin)
5. Abdullah bin Dawood bin Hasan Muthanna bin Hasan bin Ali ❦ (Mohammad Mahdi's cousin)
6. Mohammad bin Ibrahim bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali ❦ (Mohammad Mahdi's cousin)
7. Ismail bin Ibrahim bin Hasan bin Ali ❦ (Mohammad Mahdi's cousin)
8. Ishaq bin Ibrahim bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali ❦ (Mohammad Mahdi's cousin)
9. Abbas bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali ❦ (Mohammad Mahdi's cousin)
10. Musa bin Abdullah bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali ❦ (Mohammad Mahdi's brother)

### 11. Ali bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali ؑ (Mohammad Mahdi's uncle)

When Mansoor was informed of their arrest, he wrote back that along with them Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Amr bin Uthman bin Affan should also be arrested because Abdullah bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali's mother was also from the same line of Fatima bint Husain's children. Rabah complied with this order and imprisoned Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Amr. It was during this period that the Egyptian governor arrested Ali bin Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali ؑ (Mohammad Mahdi's son) and sent him to Mansoor. Mansoor put him in prison. His father had sent him to Egypt for propagation and informing the people about their ideals and beliefs.

### Building of Baghdad and Compilation of Knowledge

Saffah had made Ambâr his capital and after a short time he had his palace and buildings for his government officials constructed adjacent to Ambâr. This was a new colony and it was named Hashmia. Mansoor was at Hashmia when the commotion in Khorasan was going on. In 140 A.H., he wanted to build a separate capital and the foundation of the city of Baghdad was laid. The construction work continued for nine or ten years and was completed in 149 A.H. From that time on Baghdad was the capital of the Abbasids. During the same period, the scholars began the work of foundation and compilation of religious knowledge. Ibn Jareeh in Makkah, Malik (رحمہ اللہ) in Madina, Ibn Abi Aruba (رحمہ اللہ) and Hammad bin Sulamih in Basra, Mamar (رحمہ اللہ) in Yemen, and Sufyan Thauri (رحمہ اللہ) in Kufa began the work of compiling the Hadith (the traditions of the Prophet). Ibn Ishaq (رحمہ اللہ) and Abu Hanifa (رحمہ اللہ) wrote books on the military expeditions of the Prophet and Islamic law respectively. Prior to that, the traditions and the expeditions of the Prophet were based on verbal narration. This chain of writing and compilation went on developing and the courts of Baghdad and Cordova, Spain patronized the authors to the maximum. It was the most suitable time for writing the books of Hadith and having the enormous amount of material carried by memory written on paper.

### **The killing of the Sādāt**

The elders whom Rabah had arrested and imprisoned remained incarcerated in Madinah until the end of 144 A.H. Mansoor was constantly in search of Mohammad Mahdi and his brother Ibrahim. During this period, the brothers remained in hiding among the tribes of the Hijaz and in unknown places. They kept changing their hiding places. All of the descendants of Hasan bin Ali \* were either imprisoned or in hiding. In Dhul Hijja 144 A.H. Mansoor went to Hajj and sent Mohammad bin Imran bin Ibrahim bin Talha and Malik bin Anas to the descendants of Hasan \* who were in prison with a message asking them to hand over Mohammad and Ibrahim to Mansoor. Their father Abdullah bin Hasan Muthanna bin Hasan pleaded ignorance about them and sought his permission to appear before the caliph. Mansoor said, "As long as Abdullah bin Hasan does not bring his sons into my presence, I will not see him." When Mansoor was coming to Iraq on his return journey from Hajj, he ordered Rabah to send the captives to him in Iraq. Rabah took all the captives yoked, handcuffed and chained and then put them on camels without saddles and sent them off to Iraq under escort. Mohammad and Ibrahim, disguised as Bedouins, met their father on the way and sought his permission to rebel. But Abdullah bin Hasan exhorted and instructed them to be patient and not to be hasty. When those captives were ushered into Mansoor's presence, he called Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Amir bin Uthman to come before him, he abused him and gave him 150 lashes. Mansoor was hostile to him because the Syrians were his supporters and he commanded great respect there.

When the prisoners were shifted to Iraq, Mohammad Mahdi sent his brother Ibrahim to Iraq and Khorasan to propagate to the people there and to instigate them to oppose the Abbasids. Mansoor was sure of Mahdi's presence in the Hijaz. One of the strategies he adopted to deceive and trace him was that he used to have letters written constantly and sent them to those inhabitants of different cities who he supposed were Mahdi's supporters and might know his whereabouts. Those letters contained tributes to Mahdi and criticism of Mansoor and his shortcomings and inducements to rebellion. By these actions,

he thought that one of his spies might get access to Mohammad Mahdi and arrest him. He did not succeed in his aim and Mohammad Mahdi continued to get information about the letters from his friends. He could not accurately gauge the strength of his supporters and followers and he overestimated his following. His brother Ibrahim traveled through Basra, Kerman, Isfahan, Khorasan, Mousil and Syria, and enlisted missionaries and sympathizers. He came to the capital, ate with Mansoor and the latter failed to recognize him. The next time Mansoor came to inspect the construction of Baghdad, Mohammad Mahdi was present there among Mansoor's men. His spies informed him that Ibrahim was present there but he could not find and arrest him.

In the same way, despite his best efforts to locate him in Hijaz, Rabah failed to catch him. At last, Abu Aun, the Administrator of Khorasan sent a letter to Mansoor in 145 A.H. that secret conspiracies were on the increase there and all the Khorasanis were awaiting a revolt by Mohammad Mahdi. As soon as he read it, he sent for Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Amr bin Uthman from the jail, handed him over to the executioner and had his head chopped off and sent it to Khorasan. Along with it, he sent a few persons who swore as witnesses that the head belonged to Mohammad bin Abdullah and his grand mother was Fatima bint Mohammad. In this way the Khorasanis were fraudulently led to believe that Mohammad Mahdi was put to death and that it was his head. Then he enclosed Mohammad bin Ibrahim Mahdi's cousin, alive in a pillar of the construction. Then Abdullah bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali, Mahdi's father, and Ali bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali, Mahdi's uncle, were killed. Then Ibrahim bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali, Mahdi's uncle, and Abbas bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali, Mahdi's cousin, were tortured to death. Mansoor's stone-heartedness is very shocking. Banu Umayyah were opponents and enemies of the Alawiites and the Abbasids were extremely intimate and allies with the Alawiites. Banu Umayyah did not bear any close relation with the Alawiites. But they had very close relations with the Abbasids. The Alawiites vehemently opposed Banu Umayyah and frequently used arrows and swords against them but they did not fight with the Banu Abbas. Taking all these things into consideration and reflecting on the fact that Banu Umayyah never arrested and killed any Alawiite on mere suspicion and the only Alawiites that

were slain by them were those who fought against them on the battlefield we can consider being an enemy of the Umayyads was safer than being an ally of the Abbasids. Mansoor killed many innocent descendants of Hasan ✽ mercilessly. Yazid bin Muawiyah's killing of Husain ✽ pales into insignificance if we look at the murders of the *Sādiq* (members of the Prophet's family) in respect to the number of crimes committed. Perhaps this is only an indication of the blind lust man has for this world, which can make an intelligent man act like a murderer, to achieve what he wants.

### **The Revolt of Mohammad Mahdi *Nafse Zakiah* (the pure soul)**

When Mansoor had Abdullah bin Hasan and other descendants of Hasan ✽ killed, Mohammad Mahdi, after hearing of it, did not think it honorable to wait any longer. He was confident that the masses would support him and cancel their oaths to Mansoor. He consulted his friends in Madinah concerning the revolt. On the day of the revolt by chance, the administrator of Madinah, Rabah had been informed by his spies that Mohammad Mahdi was going to revolt on that day. He sent for Jafar bin Mohammad bin Husain and Husain bin Ali bin Husain and a few of the Quraish and said to them, "If Mohammad Mahdi rebels, I shall kill you." As the talk was going on, they heard the call of Allahu Akbar (God is the Greatest) and they immediately knew that Mohammad Mahdi had revolted. In the beginning, he had only 150 supporters. He first went to the jail and freed Mohammad bin Khalid bin Abdullah Qasri and his nephew Nazir bin Yazid bin Khalid and the others were locked up with them. Then he went to the Governor's headquarter and arrested Rabah and his brother Abbas and Ibn Muslim bin Oqba. Then he came to the mosque and delivered a sermon in which he highlighted Mansoor's bad habits and his criminal activities and promised to do justice with the people and asked for their co-operation.

After that he deputed Uthman bin Mohammad bin Khalid bin Zuhair to the post of chief justice, Abdul Aziz bin Muttalib bin Abdullah Makhzumi to the arsenal, Uthman bin Obaidullah bin Abdullah bin Omar bin Khattab to the post of chief of police. He then sent a

representative with a message to Mohammad bin Abdul Aziz asking him why he sat inside the house hidden. Mohammad bin Abdul Aziz promised to extend co-operation to him. Ismail bin Abdullah bin Jafar did not take the oath for Mohammad Mahdi. A few others also evaded the oath. Mansoor received the news nine days after the rebellion of Mohammad Mahdi and the imprisonment of Rabah. He was extremely worried and he rushed to Kufa and sent a letter as a promise of amnesty in the name of Mohammad Mahdi. He wrote as follows:

﴿بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ﴾

﴿إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا  
أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ جِزَايَ فِي الدُّنْيَا  
وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَقْرَأَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْكُفْرَ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ  
اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ﴾

In the Name of Allāh, The Most gracious, The Most Merciful.

The recompense of those who wage war against Allāh and His Messenger and do mischief in the land is only that they shall be killed or crucified or their hands and their feet be cut off from opposite sides, or be exiled from the land. That is their disgrace in this world, and a great torment is theirs in the Hereafter.

Except for those who (having fled away and then) came back (as Muslims) with repentance before they fall into your power; in that case, know that Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Q. 5:33-34)

In between, you and me stand Allāh and His Prophet's contract and obligation. I give you safety and pardon for yourself, your family and your followers in respect of life, money and goods. Furthermore, whatever blood you have shed or people's money you have usurped, you are forgiven. I grant you 100,000 dirhams additional. Besides these things, all your wants will be met and your wishes fulfilled. You will be allowed to live in the city you like. Those of your followers who are once granted safety and pardon will never be charged or

punished. If you want to be satisfied on these points, you may send your agent to me and have a contract written by me and be confident in all respects."

When the letter was received by Mohamamad Mahdi, he wrote in reply:

﴿طسم﴾ تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿١﴾ تَلْوَ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ نَبِيِّ مُوسَىٰ وَفِرْعَوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ يَذَّبَحُ أِبْنَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٣﴾ وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُّوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٤﴾ وَلَنُكِنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِي فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿٥﴾

These are the Verses of the manifest Book (that makes clear truth from falsehood, good from evil).

We recite to you some of the news of Mūsā (Moses) and Fir'aun (Pharaoh) in truth, for a people who believe (in this Qur'ān, and in the Oneness of Allāh).

Verily, Fir'aun (Pharaoh) exalted himself in the land and made its people sects, weakening (oppressing) a group (i.e. Children of Israel) among them: killing their sons, and letting their females live. Verily, he was of the *Mufsidūn* (i.e. those who commit great sins and crimes, oppressors, tyrants).

And We wished to do a favor to those who were weak (and oppressed) in the land, and to make them rulers and to make them the inheritors,

And to establish them in the land, and We let Fir'aun (Pharaoh) and Hāmān and their hosts receive from them that which they feared. (28:1-6)

We grant you the same sort of 'aman', (safety) which you have offered to me. The fact is that the government is our privilege and your claim to it is due to us and you went out as one of our groups to secure the government and met with success. Our father Ali bin Abi Talib ؑ was the Imam and heir. How did you become heir to his authority in the

presence of his descendants? You also know that we, the noble and of pure blood, never ran after the government. We are not the sons of those accused and turned out. None among Banu Hashim is equal to us in relation, priority and greatness. We are from the descendants of Fatima bint Amr in the age of Ignorance. In Islam we descend from Fatima bint Mohammad ﷺ. Allāh has made us higher and better than you. Among the Prophets our father, Mohammad ﷺ is the greatest of all and among the predecessors, there is Ali bin Abi Talib ؓ who was the first to embrace Islam. Among the impeccable wives, Khadija was the first to perform her *Salāt* (prayer). Among the girls is Fatima, the Prophet's daughter, who is superior to all the women of the world. Among the children are Hasan ؓ and Husain ؓ who are the leaders of those who will go to Paradise. Hashim bears dual relation with Ali bin Abi Talib ؓ and Hasan bin Ali bin Abi Talib ؓ is similarly doubly connected with Abdul Muttalib. I am a superior Banu Hashim in terms of purity of blood. My father is well known among Banu Hashim. I have no mixed blood of non-Arabs nor do I have the mark of a slave-girl. I make Allāh stand witness between you and me and say that if you obey me I grant you safety and pardon for your life and property and forgive you of all your misdeeds and crimes you have committed. But I will not be responsible for a specific judgment set out by Allāh or any Muslim's right or contract because in this respect, as you know, I am quite helpless. Undoubtedly, I deserve the caliphate more than you and I am a better keeper of promises. You granted safety and pardon and your word to some persons before me. So, what type of safety and pardon do you grant me, the safety and pardon granted to Ibn Hubairah, or to your uncle Abdullah bin Ali or to Abu Muslim?

Upon receiving the letter, Mansoor twisted with anger and discomfort. He then wrote the following letter and dispatched it to Mohammad Mahdi:

I read your letter. Your pride is based on the proximity of women, which can deceive only the ignorant people of the market. Allāh has not created women equivalent to uncles, fathers and guardians. He has made the uncle the deputy of the father and given priority to the nearest mother in His Book. Had he respected the relation of women, Amina [the Prophet's ﷺ mother] would have been the leader of the



people of Paradise. Allāh made those greater in rank whom He liked. As for your mention of Fatima Umm Abi Talib, it can be said that Allāh did not let any of her sons or daughters embrace Islam. Had He chosen from among the men on the basis of relation, He would have chosen Abdullah bin Abdul Muttalib and he was no doubt better in all respects. But Allāh chose for the sake of His religion whom He liked. He says:

﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ﴾

Verily, you (O Muhammad ﷺ) guide not whom you like, but Allāh guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are the guided. (Q.28:56)

When Allāh sent the Prophet ﷺ, his four uncles were living. He revealed the verse.

﴿وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ﴾

And warn your tribe (O Muhammad ﷺ) of near kindred. (Q.26:214).

So, he made them fear Allāh's punishment and invited them to the true religion. Two of the four accepted the true religion and my father was one of them. The other two refused to accept the true religion and one of them was your father (Abu Talib). So, Allāh severed their chain of authority and the Prophet ﷺ did not allow any relation and inheritance between the two parties of believers and non-believers. You have written about Hasan ﷺ that he bears a double relation with Abdul Muttalib and then that you have the same double relation with the Prophet ﷺ. My reply is this that the Prophet ﷺ is *Khairul Awwaleen-wal-Akhireen* the best of the first and the last. He had paternal relations with Banu Hashim and Abdul Muttalib. You think that you are the best among the Banu Hashim and your parents enjoyed a better reputation and you have no mixture of non-Arab blood nor a trace of a slave-girl in your line. I see that you have made yourself as a matter of pride better than the entire tribe of Banu Hashim. Think a little. How can we not disapprove of your words? How will you answer Allāh tomorrow? You have crossed the limits and declared yourself better than those who are far superior to you in person and traits, that

is, Ibrahim the Prophet ﷺ. No one from amongst the descendants of your father is better and none of them became great except the sons of slave-girls. After the Prophet's ﷺ death none among you was born better and greater than Ali bin Husain (Imam Zainul Abdeen) and he is superior to the slave-girl's sons and they were undoubtedly better than your grandfather Hasan bin Hasan. After him no one among you was born like Mohammad bin Ali. His grandmother was a slave-girl and she is better than your father. His son Jafar is better than you and his grandmother was a slave-girl. Your statement that you are the sons of the Prophet ﷺ is wrong. Allāh says in his Book,

(مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ)

Muhammad (ﷺ) is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allāh and the last (end) of the Prophets. And Allāh is Ever All-Aware of everything. (Q. 33:40)

Yes, you are the son of the Prophet's daughter and undoubtedly this relation is close but it is not entitled to inheritance nor can it be a heir to authority nor is leadership legally theirs. So how can you be an heir by virtue of this relationship? Your father wanted it most. He made Fatima رضى الله عنها come out in the light of day, concealing her illness and buried her at night but the people did not recognize anyone but the *sheikhain* (two sheiks, Abu Bakr ؓ and Umar ؓ.)

[Editor's Note: He is insinuating unjustly that Ali ؓ brought his wife out to be seen by people because it would influence them to choose him as the Caliph because of his close connection to the Prophet ﷺ through his daughter and he buried her secretly so that the loss of this connection would not be established in the peoples mind. He goes on to insinuate that in spite of these efforts the people chose Abu Bakr and Umar over him.]

All the Muslims are unanimous on the point that the maternal grandfather, maternal uncle and mother's sister cannot be heirs. Next you are proud of Ali's conversion to Islam before others. The answer to that is that the Prophet ﷺ at the time of his death, ordered somebody else to lead the *Salāt* (prayer) and afterwards the people continued to make others the leader and Caliph one after the other

and did not pick or choose him although he was also one of the six persons from among those who the Caliph was chosen. The people took him to be a misfit for this job and spared him and did not consider him to be entitled to it. Abdur Rahman preferred Uthman to him and he is an accused in the matter. (Editor: Insinuating unjustly that he was involved in the murder of Uthman.) Talha and Zuhair fought him and Sa'd refused to take oath for him. Afterwards he took the oath for Muawiya's. Then your father again wished to be caliph and fought. His friends parted with him. His supporters became suspicious as to his right to be ruler and judge and then they unanimously fixed two persons to decide the matter. Both of those chosen agreed on his dismissal (Editor: He is selectively applying the facts, please refer back to the Vol. I concerning Amr bin Aas and Musa Ashari's judgment concerning Muawiya and Ali). Then Hasan became caliph and he sold out the caliphate to Muawiya for clothes and money and presented his supporters to Muawiya and entrusted the leadership to the incapable (Editor: He means your family sold the caliphate to Banu Umayyah). So, even if you were entitled to it, you have already sold it and received its price. Then your uncle Husain rebelled against Ibn Marjanah (Ibn Zeyad). The people joined Ibn Zeyad against your uncle to such an extent that they killed your uncle, cut off his head and presented it to Ibn Zeyad. Then you rebelled against Banu Umayyah. They put you to death, hung one of you on the branches of a date palm, burnt him in the fire, in that way they killed Yahya bin Zaid in Khorasan. Your men were killed and your children and women were imprisoned and made to sit on camels without veils, sent them to Syria like slave girls on sale until we stood up in revolt and we demanded compensation for your blood. Then we took revenge for the killings and we made you the masters of their lands and property. We venerated your elders. Do you want to declare us guilty on this account? Perhaps you have been deceived because they used to mention your father having a priority over Hamza, Abbas and Jafar. The fact is that whatever you have thought is not the reality. They all left the world in the highest state of cleanliness and everyone recognized their virtue and greatness without dispute. However, your father was involved in internal

fighting and killing. Banu Umayyah used to curse him as the unbelievers are cursed in the obligatory prayers. So, we quarreled with them, we narrated the virtues of those who were cursed, we adopted strict measures against Banu Umayyah and punished them. Our greatness during the days of ignorance was by virtue of our supplying water to the pilgrims, and this privilege was available to Abbas ؑ only. Your father quarreled with us over it. Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ gave his judgement in our favor. So, we have been the owner of this honor both during the days of ignorance and the time of Islam. During the famine in Madinah Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ prayed to Allāh for rain by means of our father and he sent down rain. Though your father was alive, he did not ask for rain through him. Do you know that when the Prophet ﷺ breathed his last, none except Abbas ؑ from among Banu Abdul Muttalib was left? Therefore, the legacy was transferred to the paternal uncle. Then several persons from Banu Hashim wanted to be caliph but none except the descendants of Abbas ؑ were successful. The authority of cup bearing already belonged to him, the Prophet's legacy from Abdul Muttalib and the caliphate came to his descendants. In short no distinction between this world and hereafter between the days of ignorance and Islam remained which Abbas ؑ was not the inheritor of. When Islam spread, Abbas ؑ had stood surety for Abu Talib and his descendants and cared for them during the famine. Had Abbas ؑ not been spared in the expedition of Badr, Abu Talib and Aqeel would have starved to death and would have continued to lick the utensils of Utbah and Shaibah, but Abbas ؑ kept providing them with food. He saved your honor, protected you from slavery and continued to supply food and clothing. Then in the battle of Badr, he had released Aqeel by paying the ransom. So, why do you brag before us? We cared for your family during unbelief, paid your ransom, saved the honor of your elders, became the heirs to the last Prophet ﷺ, took revenge for you and achieved what you failed to achieve. Peace be upon you.

It is understood that in the matter of racial pride Mohammad Mahdi undoubtedly started the rivalry and what Mansoor wrote, he wrote replying to this rivalry. However, Mansoor went beyond the limit in his reply. Mohammad Mahdi wrote nothing negative about Abbas ؑ.

But Mansoor unnecessarily used impertinent words about Ali bin Abi Talib ❀. He has also slandered Ali ❀ when he said that the latter took out Fatima Zahra during the day time for the sake of increasing his chances of getting the caliphate. He also was very rude regarding the Hasan ❀. The fact is that Hasan bin Ali ❀ did not sell out the caliphate rather he unified and reconciled the two warring factions of the Muslims and thereby he fulfilled the Prophet's prophecy. Abbas ❀ helped Abu Talib without doubt and brought up Aqeel and kept him with him. But to speak of it satirically and ironically does not befit a person of noble bearing. Actually to mention such favors is considered to be a sign of meanness and by mentioning such things, he has displayed his lowness.

After making the administrative arrangements for Madinah, Mohammad Mahdi sent Mohammad bin Hasan bin Muawiya bin Abdullah bin Jafar to Makkah, Qasim bin Ishaq to Yemen and Musa bin Abdullah to Syria as Amirs. So Mohammad bin Hasan and Qasim bin Ishaq left Madinah together. The Abbasid administrator of Makkah fought and lost and Mohammad bin Hasan occupied it.

After dispatching the above mentioned letter, Mansoor sent Isa bin Musa to fight with Mohammad Mahdi. Isa was accompanied by Mohammad bin Saffah, Katheer bin Haseen Abdi and Humaid bin Qahtaba and at the time of departure Isa bin Musa and other commanders were instructed that if they got the better of Mohammad Mahdi, they should not kill him but give him pardon and safety. If he went into hiding then the civilians of Madinah who know him should be arrested and those from among the descendants of Abi Talib who visited them should have their names record and the commanders should send them to him and those who refused to call on them, the commanders should confiscate their money and property. When Isa bin Musa reached Feed, he sent for a few people from Madinah by letter. Abdullah bin Mohammad bin Omar bin Ali bin Abi Talib, his brother Omar bin Mohammad bin Ali bin Abi Talib, Abu Aqeel Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Aqeel came out of Madinah and went to Isa. When Mohammad Mahdi was informed of his arrival, he consulted with his men on whether they should fight outside of Madinah or defend by remaining inside. When the counselors

disagreed, following the Prophet ﷺ, he ordered the same trench to be dug, which the Prophet ﷺ had originally used. Meanwhile Isa bin Musa camped at Awad. Mohammad Mahdi forbade the people of Madinah to fight outside the city and so no one was allowed to go out. When Isa approached near to Madinah, he allowed the people to go out of the city. It was a mistake that he cancelled his first order. The people of Madinah in large numbers along with their families went to the mountains for safety because of this, only a very small number remained with Mohammad Mahdi in Madinah to fight Isa. It was at that time that he realized his blunder and he sent his men to bring them back but they could not. Isa left Awad and camped at a distance of four miles from Madinah. He deployed a part of the army on the road to Makkah so that Mohammad Mahdi would not be able to escape and go to Makkah. Then he sent word to him, "Caliph Mansoor grants you pardon and safety, invites you towards judgment by the Book and Sunnah and threatens you with the consequences of rebellion."

Mohammad Mahdi sent back the reply that he was a man who never turned his back for fear of being killed. On 12 Ramadan 145 A.H., Isa bin Musa went ahead and camped at Jurf. On 14 Ramadan 145 A.H. he stood at a high place and spoke loudly, "O the people of Madinah! I grant you safety provided you don't intervene between Mohammad Mahdi and me and stay neutral."

The Madinah people heard and began to abuse him and Isa went back. The next day he went to the same place again with the intention of fighting and spread out his commanders around Madinah. Mohammad Mahdi also came out to face him. His flag was held by Uthman bin Mohammad bin Khalid bin Zubair and his saying was *Ahad, Ahad* (One, One). Abu Ghulmash was the first to come out from his side to challenge the enemies. Several renowned commanders from Isa's side came onto the field to answer his challenge but they all lost their lives. Then the battle began with both sides exhibiting real bravery. The commanders of both sides displayed wonderful swordsmanship and breached the opposing lines. Then at Isa's instance Humaid bin Qahtaba moved towards the nearest wall of the trench with his troops. Mohammad Mahdi's men tried to prevent them by shooting arrows at them but Humaid continued his forward

march firmly and leveled it to the ground, crossed the trench and began hand to hand combat with Mohammad Mahdi's soldiers. This gave Isa the chance to fill up the moat at several places to make a way across it. The cavalry crossed the moat and pounced upon Mohammad Mahdi's army and a fierce battle ensued. Mohammad Mahdi's army was small and the invaders out-numbered them several times over and they were more fully armed. The battle continued from morning to the time of the mid-afternoon prayer. Mohammad Mahdi granted open permission to his men to save themselves if they liked. His followers requested him repeatedly to save himself and to go to Basra or Makkah and after collecting men and weapons anew to face his opponents again. But he gave the same reply to all, saying, "If you want to save yourselves, you are at liberty to go anywhere you like but I cannot flee because of fear of the enemy." Finally, only 300 men were left with him and at that time one of his men, Isa bin Khudair burnt the register containing the names of those who took the oath with him. Then he went to the jail and killed Rabah bin Uthman and his brother. Mohammad bin Qasri shut the door of his room and survived. After doing this, he came back to Mohammad Mahdi and began to fight again. His cavalry cut off the legs of their horses, broke into pieces their sheaths, took the pledge of death and attacked the enemies. The attack was so fierce and horrible that Isa's army suffered a defeat and retreated and fled. A few of Isa's men climbed around a hill and went down its other side into Madinah, took a black covering of an Abbasid woman and waved it over the minaret of the mosque like a flag. Mohammad Mahdi's men were out of their wits when they saw it. They thought that Isa's men had taken possession of Madinah and they moved backward. Isa's fleeing soldiers took advantage of the opportunity they rallied and attacked again. One of the groups entered the city from Banu Ghaffar's side and began to fight with Mohammad Mahdi. The situation was contrary to what he expected. Mohammad Mahdi did not expect that Banu Ghaffar would allow a way for the enemy to enter. Resolving himself to this he moved forward and called out to Humaid bin Qahtaba to single combat but Humaid did not dare to come out to face him. Mohammad Mahdi's men again launched the attack on the enemies. Isa bin Khudair was fighting very valiantly. Isa bin Musa went forward and called him



loudly, "I grant you safety and pardon. Give up fighting." But Isa bin Khudair did not care about this and continued until he fell down exhausted and mortally wounded. Mohammad Mahdi began to fight over his dead body. Isa bin Musa's soldiers attacked him from all sides and he retaliated and pushed them back. He displayed such matchless valor and his martial art was so superior, that none from among Isa bin Musa's soldiers dared to fight with him. At last, some one speared him from behind. As he bent down a little under its impact, Humaid bin Qahtaba rushed forward and pierced his chest with his javelin. When two javelins passed through his chest from the front and the back, he fell dead. Humaid bin Qahtaba quickly got down from his horse and severed his head and brought it to Isa bin Musa. Immediately after the death of this valiant warrior, Madinah fell to Isa bin Musa. He sent his head and the letter of victory to Mansoor by the hands of Mohammad bin Abilkarām bin Abdullah bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Jafar and Qasim bin Hasan bin Zaid bin Hasan bin Ali bin Abi Talib. This disaster occurred on Monday 15 Ramadan 145 A.H. between the afternoon prayer and the sunset prayer. Isa bin Musa hanged Mohammad Mahdi's dead body on a cross between Madinah and Thaniyatul wada'. His sister Zainab took permission and buried his dead body in Baqi. In this battle Mohammad Mahdi's brother Musa bin Abdullah Hamza bin Abdullah bin Mohammad bin Ali bin Husain, Ali bin Zaid bin Ali bin Husain bin Ali, Zaid bin Hasan bin Zaid bin Hasan fought on Mohammad Mahdi's side. It is surprising that the fathers of Ali and Zaid were Mansoor's supporters. Similarly, there were other Hashmite and Alawiite fathers and sons who were pitted against one another. Perhaps they were horrified at the sight of Banu Abbas's killings and annihilation as was Ali bin Husain (Zainul Abedeen) who was so shocked and terrified having been witness to the scene at Karbala that he never did anything against Banu Umayyah and always supported them. In the same way, the influential among the Alawiites considered opposition of Banu Abbas to be the cause of destruction. Mohammad Mahdi suffered defeat simply because his own relatives did not support him and that their lack of support alienated others. So when he took the oath from the people of Madinah and announced his caliphate after imprisoning Rabah bin Uthman, he sent for Ismail bin Abdullah bin Jafar, an old



man, to take the oath. He wrote back, "Nephew, you will be killed. How can I take the oath for you?" Hearing his reply some people who had taken the oath retracted it. Hamadah bint Muawiya came to Ismail bin Abdullah and said to him, "Your statement has alienated many people from Mohammad Mahdi but my brothers are still with him. I am afraid they may also be killed with him." In brief, alienation of his relatives and members of his family kept him from growing powerful otherwise, the caliphate might have possibly come to the descendants of Hasan ؑ. If he had escaped and stayed clear of Madinah or had not revolted so soon and had waited for his brother to follow suit and both of them had revolted together, success would have been sure. Mansoor and the Abbasids were lucky that the Abbasid army had to fight Mohammad and Ibrahim one after another while their strength remained undivided.

### **The Rebellion of Ibrahim bin Abdullah**

When Mansoor had come on a visit to inspect the building of Baghdad, Ibrahim bin Abdullah, Mohairunad Mahdi's brother, was with him in disguise. He escaped to Kufa and Mansoor sent out spies to hunt him down. When he thought that Ibrahim was in Basra, he sent a spy to every house there, though Ibrahim was with Sufyan bin Hibban Qammi at his house in Kufa. It was a well-known fact that Sufyan was a close friend of Ibrahim. Sufyan was horrified to see how tight the surveillance was. He mapped out a plan to allow Ibrahim to leave safely. He went to Mansoor and said to him, "Give me in writing a permit for free passage for me and my slaves and a small body of soldiers so that I may arrest Ibrahim wherever we find him." Mansoor did accordingly. Sufyan returned home he had Ibrahim put on his slave's clothes, took him with them and left Kufa with his small force. He came to Basra, deployed the soldiers to search each house. When the soldiers had left, he sent him to Ahwaz and he himself went into hiding. Sufyan bin Muawiya was the Amir of Basra at that time. When he found out, he collected the deployed soldiers and started searching for Ibrahim bin Abdullah and Sufyan bin Hibban but without success. Mohammad bin Haseen was the Amir of Ahwaz. When Ibrahim reached Ahwaz, he stayed with Hasan bin Habeab. His spies informed the Amir of Ahwaz that Ibrahim was in Ahwaz. He began searching

for him. Ibrahim remained hidden in Habeeb's house for a long time and continued to let people participate in the propagation for his cause. In 145 A.H. Yahya bin Zeyad bin Hibban Nabti called Ibrahim to Basra and enthusiastically began to invite the people to take the oath for Mohammad Mahdi. A large group of learned and influential people took the oath. 4000 people were enrolled in the Basra Register as having taken the oath. During this period, Mohammad Mahdi revolted in Madinah and wrote to Ibrahim to revolt in Basra. Mansoor had sent a few commanders to Basra as a precautionary measure so that they might help the Administrator of Basra, Sufyan bin Muawiyah, if there was any sign of mutiny. If Ibrahim had risen in revolt then as Muhammad Mahdi had requested, Mansoor would have been quite helpless and both the brothers would have gathered strength. However, at that time, Ibrahim was sick in Basra and so he temporarily delayed his revolt. When Mansoor sent the army to fight with Mohammad Mahdi, Ibrahim rebelled in Basra on 1 Ramadan 145 A.H. Jafar and Muhammad, the sons of Sulaiman bin Ali, Mansoor's cousins had been lying in wait along with 600 men outside of Basra by the orders of Mansoor. As soon as the brothers heard the news of Ibrahim's rebellion, they attacked and only 50 men were sent out to face those 600 men yet they defeated them and forced them to flee. Ibrahim captured all of Basra and took the oath from the people in general and proclaimed a general amnesty and pardon. He then withdrew two hundred thousand dirhams from the treasury and distributed it at the rate of 50 dirhams to each of his merit. Then he sent Mughira to Ahwaz along with 100 soldiers. The administrator of Ahwaz, Mohammad bin Haseen, came out with 4000 soldiers to fight the small force but they defeated the 4000 soldiers and Mughira captured Ahwaz. Ibrahim sent Amr bin Shaddad to Persia where the Governor Ismail bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib and his brother Abdus Samad clashed with him but they suffer a defeat and Amr bin Shaddad occupied Persia. Similarly, Haroon bin Shams Ajli was ordered to march towards Wasit and he defeated Mansoor's Governor Haroon bin Humaid Ayadi and captured Wasit. In short, the day Mohammad Mahdi and Isa bin Musa clashed with each other leading to Muhammad Mahdi's martyrdom, Basra, Persia Wasit and a big part of Iraq had gone out of Mansoor's control. Syria

was soon to go out of his hands and the Kufans had also been waiting and watching. Mansoor's government stood no chance of survival. Ibrahim revolted in Basra on 1 Ramadan and continued the series of victories until the end of the month. Immediately after the end of Ramadan Ibrahim received the news of Mohammad Mahdi's death. He offered the prayer for the *Eid* at the end of Ramadan and in the sermon announced the news. When the news was heard by those who were engaged in fighting with Mansoor's administrator, their spirits were dampened. It encouraged Mansoor's commanders and administrators. When the people of Basra received the news, they recognized Ibrahim as their caliph in place of Mohammad Mahdi and were ready to show their readiness more than they did before. There were many Kufans among Ibrahim's men in Basra. The people from Basra wanted Basra to be the capital and command center for deploying troops in the surrounding areas. But the Kufans disagreed with them and suggested that Ibrahim should take his army towards Kufa where the inhabitants were waiting for him. Ibrahim agreed with them and made up his mind to go to Kufa after making his son his deputy there. When the news reached Mansoor, he was very disturbed. Immediately he sent a messenger to Isa bin Musa asking him to come at once to him at Kufa. He wrote to Mahdi in Khorasan and asked him to invade Persia immediately. So all the administrators who were safe from danger were called. He asked those who were near to Mansoor's commanders not to lose heart. Troops from all sides began to pour in fast until a one hundred thousand man army collected in Kufa. When he had received the news of Ibrahim's attack, Mansoor did not change his clothes for 50 days. He often kept sitting on his prayer mat. Ibrahim bin Abdullah with a one hundred thousand man army camped at a distance of 30 or 40 miles from Kufa, and Isa bin Musa arrived in Kufa with his own army. Mansoor sent Isa bin Musa to confront Ibrahim and deployed Humaid bin Qahtaba at the vanguard. Ibrahim was advised to dig a moat around the military camp but his men said that they were not the attacked but the attackers so no moat was needed. His men advised Ibrahim to send soldiers to fight in divisions so that in case of the defeat of one division of the army another fresh division might be sent in as reinforcements. However, Ibrahim disapproved of the suggestion and

ordered the soldiers to stand and fight by arraying themselves according to the traditional way. Humaid bin Qahtaba fled after being defeated. Isa tried to stop him by rebuking him but he did not stop. Isa then threw himself into the battle. However, most of his men could not stand the pressure and started fleeing. Isa still stood firm on the battlefield but when there was no doubt of his imminent defeat, Jafar and Muhammad, Sulaiman bin Ali's sons, arrived behind Ibrahim with their army. Ibrahim's soldiers grew nervous at the fresh invasion and diverted their attention towards them. Isa regrouped his men and attacked and the runaway soldiers rallied. Humaid bin Qahtaba also regrouped and attacked with his men. Ibrahim's army was between the invading armies, which cut the battlefield in size and his soldiers were not able to fight wholeheartedly. At last, they became disarrayed and began to flee. Finally, only 400 men were left with him. They were surrounded by Isa, Humaid, Mohammad and Jafar. An arrow pierced Ibrahim's neck, which proved fatal. His men dismounted him from their horses, made a circle around him and continued defending and fighting. Qahtaba ordered his cavalry to launch an attack with all their power. He defeated Ibrahim's men, cut off his head and presented it to Isa who sent it to Mansoor. This took place on 25 Dhul Qada 145 A.H. With this victory, he was able to arrest Hasan bin Ibrahim bin Abdullah in Basra and imprison him. He imprisoned Yaqub bin Dawood also.

### **Miscellaneous Events**

After getting free from the killing of Mohammad Mahdi and his brother, Mansoor assigned the governorship of Basra to Salim bin Qutaiba Bahli and that of Mousil to his own son Jafar. He sent Harith bin Abdullah as Commander of the armed forces with him.

Imam Malik رحمته الله, who had induced people to take the oath for Mohammad Mahdi, was lashed. Imam Abu Hanifa رحمته الله, who gave a *fatwah* (religious judgment) in favor of Ibrahim bin Abdullah was arrested and brought before Mansoor who imprisoned him in Baghdad where construction work on the city was still in progress. It is said that Mansoor wanted to appoint him to the post of chief justice. When he refused, he was assigned to count and keep the records of

the bricks used in the construction. In that state of captivity he died in 150 A.H. Besides these famous scholars other scholars like Ibn Ajlan, Abdul Humaid bin Jafar and others who gave religious judgments to take the oath for Mohammad Mahdi and his brother Ibrahim were persecuted like wise.

In 146 A.H., the Turks in Khazar revolted and marched from Babul Abwab to Armenia killing and slaughtering Muslims. That same year the Muslims launched a naval attack on Cyprus. When the Khwarij rebelled in Sistan, Mansoor transferred Ma'an bin Zaidah from the governorship of Yemen to Sistan where he ended the disorder and fighting. He remained there until 151 A.H. until he was eventually murdered treacherously by the Khwarij.

### **Abdullah Ushtar Ibn Mohammad Mahdi**

When Mohammad Mahdi revolted, the governor of Sindh was Mansoor's man Omar bin Hafs bin Uthman bin Qabisah bin Abi Sufrah. After the revolt, Mohammad Mahdi had sent his son Abdullah alias Ushtar to his uncle Ibrahim in Basra. From there Ushtar at the instance of his uncle, took a swift-paced she-camel and set out for Sindh because sympathy and possible reinforcements were expected from the governor. Abdullah Ushtar reached Sindh, invited Omar bin Hafs to their cause and he accepted, recognized Mohammad Mahdi's caliphate, defaced the symbols of the Abbasids and incorporated Mohammad Mahdi's name into the Friday sermon. During the same period, news of Mohammad Mahdi's death reached the governor. He informed Abdullah Ushtar of the incident and offered his condolences. Ushtar said, "Now my life is in danger. Where should I go and what should I do?" There were many kings in Sindh who had converted to Islam during Omar bin Abdul Aziz's regime and who ruled according to his directives in their jurisdictions. They recognized the reigning caliphs but followed all the supporters of Islam and stuck to the rights of their rule. Omar bin Hafs told Ushtar to go to a certain state of a Sindhi King. He loves the Prophet ﷺ and is known for the fulfillment of his commitments. He will surely treat you kindly, affectionately and respectfully. Abdullah Ushtar expressed his willingness. Omar received a written pledge from that king for Ushtar

through correspondence and sent Ushtar to him. The Sindhi king married his daughter to him. He lived there until 151 A.H. and during that period about 400 Arabs drawn from the adjoining areas collected at Ushtar's place. By chance, Mansoor came to know that Abdullah Ushtar was living with the King of Sindh and a small group of Arabs were with him. Mansoor recalled Omar bin Hafs from the governorship of Sindh and sent him to Egypt in the same capacity. He dispatched Hisham bin 'Amr Taghlibi to Sindh as governor. At the time of departure, he ordered him to arrest Ushtar at any cost. If the Sindhi King refused to hand him over, he should attack him. Hisham bin Amr tried his best to recover Abdullah Ushtar but the Sindhi King would not give him up. At last, they prepared to fight. The part of the country where Ushtar was staying was attacked by Safih, Hisham bin 'Amr's brother. One day it so happened that Ushtar in the company of 10 horsemen went along the Sindh River for sightseeing. Suddenly they came across Safih's army. Safih tried to arrest him. Ushtar and his men fought. At last, Ushtar and his men were killed. Hisham bin 'Amr informed Mansoor of the incident. He wrote back to him that the country of that king must be destroyed. So a chain of battles began. Hisham eventually captured his whole country. Ushtar's wife along with her son were caught and sent to Mansoor. He sent them to Madinah to be under the guardianship of the deceased's family.

### **Mahdi bin Mansoor's Succession**

At the time of his death, Abdullah Saffah had made Mansoor his heir-apparent to be followed by Isa bin Musa after him. Now according to the will Isa bin Musa was to be the caliph after Mansoor. However, when Mansoor was relieved from the dangers of Mohammad Mahdi and Ibrahim and no longer needed Isa bin Musa's help, he wished to make his own son Mahdi his successor. First, he mentioned it to Isa but Isa refused to accept it. Mansoor then manipulated to allow Khalid bin Barmak and some other non-Arab chiefs participate in the consultations and support his stand and then he deposed Isa bin Musa from the governorship of Kufa, in which capacity he had been serving since Saffah's time and sent Mohammad bin Sulaiman as governor in his place. The dismissal from the governorship led to the liquidation of his power and he realized his mistake of disagreeing with Mansoor.

In short, by rendering Isa powerless Mansoor, by virtue of his cunningness, deceit, allurements and hypocrisy took from the people the oath for the succession of Mahdi. He tried to console Isa bin Musa too by making him the successor after Mahdi. Khalid bin Barmak gave publicity to the statement that Isa abdicated in his presence and so the Amir Al-Muminin made his son his successor. For this act, Mansoor had spent money lavishly and pleased the people by giving away gifts and rewards to them on the occasion. Isa bin Musa had contributed most to strengthening and saving Mansoor's government. It was Isa who defeated and killed Mohammad Mahdi and Ibrahim and relieved him of a great danger. In exchange for these services he rendered he was rewarded with dismissal from the succession and Mahdi bin Mansoor superseded him. After the deposition from the governorship of Kufa, he went to Rahba in Kufa, settled down there and began to pass a quiet life.

Slowly and gradually all the obstacles in Mansoor's way were cleared except Spain, his government was firmly established in all the Islamic countries by 148 A.H. In 149 A.H., the construction of Baghdad was also completed. Because of the above situations and incidents, the Muslims did not have time to declare Jihad on the Romans. In 149 A.H., Abbas bin Mohammad, Hasan bin Qahtaba and Mohammad bin Ash'ath invaded the Romans and scored many victories against them.

### **Ustad Sees's revolt**

In 150 A.H. Ustad Sees claimed to be a prophet in Khorasan. Thousands of people accepted his prophethood at once. The inhabitants of Herat, Badghais, and Sistan assembled under his flag and the greater part of Khorasan fell to him. Mansoor was extremely concerned and pensive on hearing this. The ruler of Mardrood named Jasm, observed the situation and attacked him with all his might. Jasm was defeated and killed. Then Khazim bin Khuzaima used strategy and surrounded Ustad Sees's army and attacked him on two flanks. 70,000 men of Ustad Sees were killed. He was besieged along with 14,000 remaining men in a mountain. After a prolonged siege, he surrendered along with his men to Khuzaima and Mansoor was informed of Ustad Sees's capture.



## **The Building of Rosafah**

When Ustad Sees revolted, Khorasan was governed by Mahdi. He lived at Merv. Khazim bin Khuzaima also lodged with him and attacked at the instance of Mansoor. Becoming free from this trouble, Mahdi went to Mansoor. At that time, the dominating elements of power were the Arab tribes and they alone were responsible for all the territorial victories. The non-Arabs and Khorasanis did not claim to be equal to the Arabs in military expertise. The Arab tribes were always feared because if they united in opposition, they could topple the government at any time. Imam Ibrahim was the first to realize this fact and adopted the policy of strengthening the non-Arabs and utilizing them to his advantage. His successors also followed suit. Following this strategy, Abdullah Saffah had Abu Sulamih killed, and appointed Khalid bin Barmak as his minister, who was originally a Zoroastrian from Nawbahar, a new Muslim and a military chief of Abu Muslim. After a short time, he was made the governor of a state. Abu Ayyub replaced him and Mansoor made him the minister again. The Zoroastrians were assigned as military chiefs and governors of various states and their power continued to rise but the military element of the Arabs was still dominant. This policy reminds us of the Indian King Akbar and his dual policy, which he had adopted to safeguard himself against the powerful and influential Pathans, in India. He thought it essential to breathe a new life into the dead Hindu community and make them powerful in order to avert and lessen the danger from the Pathans so much so that he made Man Singh the commander-in-chief of India and continued his efforts to weaken the Pathans everywhere. The Abbasids also reduced the Arab power and replaced them by the fire-worshippers and the Iranians so that no Alawite would dare to rise in revolt with the support of the Arab tribes. On the occasion of Mahdi's return from Khorasan and appearance before Mansoor, the Arab soldiers, in order to receive compensation, behaved in such a way that exhibited their independence of mind and strong will. They were not in the habit of showing respect to their king or caliph unnecessarily like the fireworshipping Zoroastrians. This kept the Abbasids in perpetual fear. Perhaps it was this independence of mind that never deterred



them from joining every new movement and every new claimant to the caliphate. Qasam bin Abbas bin Obaidullah bin Abbas, after watching and studying the condition of the army, cleverly created a rivalry and animosity between two Arab tribes, Rabia and Mudar. Then he advised Mansoor, saying, "As there is enmity between the tribes of Mudar and Rabia, it is reasonable that you divide the army into two parts. Keep the Mudar tribe under Mahdi because the Khorasanis are their supporters and keep the Rabia tribe under you because all the Yemenis are their sympathizers. With two army headquarters set up on different sides they will be kept afraid of each other, ruling out any possibility of mutiny."

Mansoor liked the idea and for the living quarters of his son Mahdi he ordered Rosafah to be constructed to the north of Baghdad in 151 A.H. and to set up a separate cantonment for his forces there. That same year 153 A.H. Mohammad Ash'ath died on his return journey from the Roman territories.

In 153 A.H., Mansoor made a proclamation to the effect that all his subjects should put on high caps that were made of bamboo and leaves. These caps were generally used by Africans. In 154 A.H. Zafar bin Asim invaded Rome. In 155 A.H. the Roman emperor, becoming exhausted from repeated invasions by the Muslims, requested for reconciliation and agreed to pay the *jizyah*.

### **The Death of Mansoor**

In 158 A.H., Mansoor wrote to the administrator of Makkah to arrest Sufyan Thouri and Abbad bin Katheer and send them to him. The people apprehended that he might murder them. The season of Hajj was approaching and Mansoor had made up his mind to go to Hajj. This caused concern among the Makkans even more. Only Allāh knew how many people would be arrested and killed. But the Makkan's prayer was granted and Mansoor died before reaching Makkah. The details of the incident are as follows. In the month of Dhul Qada 158 A.H., Mansoor left for Baghdad with the intention of Hajj. At the time of departure he made his son Mahdi his deputy there and made the following will:

"Protect the box containing my dairies and look for solutions to your problems therein. Safeguard the city of Baghdad and don't change or shift the capital. I have accumulated treasure that will suffice to pay the salaries of the soldiers and meet other administrative expenditures even if no tax is collected for 10 years. Deal with your relatives kindly, honor them and appoint them to high posts. I exhort you to treat the Khorasanis well for they are your helpers and your right hand and have sacrificed their lives and material for establishing the government and rule of your family. I think you will not be able to forget their love. Excuse their mistakes and please them with gifts and rewards for their remarkable achievements. Beware! Don't seek help from anybody belonging to Banu Sulaim. Don't allow your women to poke their noses into your affairs. Protect the community of the Prophet ﷺ. Don't shed unnecessary and unlawful blood. Abide by the limits prescribed by Allāh. Attack the atheists and stamp out alterations in the religion or any schism. Do justice and don't be immoderate. Leave the spoils for the soldiers for I have left you a huge treasure. Protect your borders and see that the roads are safe and peaceful. Take care of the peoples' property. Don't part with the group. Always be ready with cavalry and foot soldiers in as large numbers as possible. Don't postpone your work for the morrow. Be firm in times of adversity and misfortune. Don't be lazy. Make it easy for the people to visit your court. Beware of the doorkeepers and see that they are not strict with the people."

Mansoor left Baghdad and arrived in Kufa. He entered in the state of *Ihram* (the rituals) for Hajj and Umrah and sent ahead the sacrificial animals. He had hardly traveled two or three stages from Kufa when he was taken ill. During that illness, he kept his liberated slave Rabi, who was his doorkeeper and officer of his bodyguards, in attendance. He died on 6 Dhul Hijjah 158 A.H. at Batan, a place three miles from Makkah. No one except his chief attendants and Rabi were present at the time of his death. They concealed the news of his death that day. The next day Isa bin Ali, Isa bin Musa bin Mohammad, Abbas bin Mohammad bin Sulaiman, Ibrahim bin Yahya, Qasim bin Mansoor, Hasan bin Zaid Alawi, Musa bin Mahdi bin Mansoor, and Ali bin Isa

bin Mâhân who accompanied him on the journey, were called to appear in the court. Rabi announced the news of the caliph's death. He then read out a paper written by Mansoor, which said:

In the name of Allâh, the Most Beneficent and Merciful. From Abdullâh Mansoor to those who remain of Banu Hashim, Khorasanis and the general Muslims. I am writing this will during my lifetime, the last day of this world and the first day of my hereafter. I offer you the greeting of peace and Pray Allâh not to put you into any mischief nor to divide you into sects nor give you a chance to taste civil war. You have admitted to obey my son Mahdi, abide by it and refrain from breach of trust and betrayal.

Having read the paper Rabi beckoned Musa bin Mahdi bin Mansoor to take the oath on behalf of his father Mahdi as his deputy. He first caught hold of Hasan bin Zaid's hands and asked him to get up and take the oath. Hasan complied, and the others followed suit one after another. Isa bin Musa refused. Ali bin Isa bin Mâhân said, "If you refuse to take the oath, I shall chop off your head." Thus forced Isa bin Musa also took the oath then the chiefs of the army and the general public followed. Then Abbas bin Mohammad and Mohammad bin Sulaiman visited Makkah and standing near to the Ka'bah, they took the oaths of the people for Mahdi. Then Isa bin Musa led the funeral prayer. He was buried in the 'Mu'alla' graveyard in between Hajoon and Maimoon well. Then Rabi sent the news of Mansoor's death, his ring and the Prophet's  $\text{†}$  coverlet and staff to Mahdi. The news reached Mahdi in Baghdâd on 15 Dhul Hijjah 158 A.H. The inhabitants of the city came to Mahdi and took the oath.

Mansoor was Caliph for 22 years less one week. He left seven sons and one daughter. The names of his sons were: Mohammad Mahdi, Jafar Akbar, Jafar Asghar, Sulaiman, Isa, Yaqub, and Salim. The name of his daughter was Aliyah who was married to Ishaq bin Sulaiman bin Ali.

Somebody asked Caliph Mansoor, "Have you any wish that has remained unfulfilled?" He said, "Only one wish is left to be fulfilled. And that is: I am sitting on a platform and the seekers of the *Ahâdith* are sitting around me." The next day when the ministers came to him

with papers, registers of litigation and writing utensils, the man who had put the question to Mansoor was also present at the time. He said, "Lo! Your wish has also been fulfilled." Mansoor said, "These are not the people I wish for those, that I long for have torn clothes, bare feet and long hair and they narrate *Ahâdith*."

When Mansoor persuaded Imam Malik to compile the *Muwatta*, he said to him, "O Abu Abdullah! You know that none except you and I are left in Islam who know the *Shariah* best. I am engaged in the wrangling of the caliphate and its authority. You are free. Write a book for the benefit of the people. Don't fill the book with the justifications of Ibn Abbas and the violence and prudence of Ibn Omar and set an example of composition and compilation for the people." Imam Malik says, "By Allâh! Mansoor did not say these things but taught me how to write."

Abdus Samad Mohammad said to Mansoor, "You have girded your loins to punish people so much that none has the inkling that you know how to forgive." He replied, "The blood of the descendants of Marwan has not dried up and the swords of the descendants of Abi Talib are still bare. This is the time when their hearts are not overawed by the caliphs and this awe cannot be established unless they forget the meaning of forgiveness and always expect to be punished." Zeyad bin Abdullah Harithi wrote to Mansoor to increase his salary and property rights a little. He used all his art of eloquence in its presentation. Mansoor replied, "When prosperity and eloquence come to a man, they make him self-conceited. I apprehend this danger in you. It is better if you give up eloquence." The African, Abdur Rahman bin Zeyad had been Mansoor's friend since his student days. Once during his caliphate he paid a visit to him. Mansoor said to him, "How do you find my caliphate compared to that of Banu Umayyah?" Abdur Rahman bin Zeyad said, "The atrocities that are perpetrated in your regime, were non-existent in that of Banu Umayyah." Mansoor said, "What should I do? I don't find helpers." Abdur Rahman said, "Omar bin Abdul Aziz عليه السلام, said, "If the king is pious, he will get pious people. If he is wicked, the wicked will come to him." Once Mansoor was fed up with some houseflies. He sent for Muqatil bin Sulaiman and said, "Why has Allâh created these flies?" Muqatil said, "To humiliate the oppressors through them."

During Mansoor's regime translations of Suryani and Non-Arabic books began to be made into Arabic. Geometry and 'Kalilah Dimnah' were translated during his times. He made the palmists and astronomers live near him. It was during his caliphate that the Abbasids and Alawiites fought otherwise prior to it they were united.

In respect of his nature and habits and his deeds and remarkable achievements Mansoor Abbasi resembled Abdul Malik Umayyah. Abdul Malik was the second caliph of the Marwan dynasty and Mansoor was also the second caliph of the Abbasid dynasty. Abdul Malik saved the Umayyah caliphate from ruin. Similarly, Mansoor saved the Abbasid caliphate from Mohammad Mahdi and his brother Ibrahim. Abdul Malik was an *Alim* (scholar), a *Faqih* (an expert on Islamic law) and a *Mohaddith* (he related the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ). Similarly Mansoor was an *Alim* and *Faqih*, Abdul Malik was accused of being extremely economical and a miser. Mansoor was also notorious for these same two characteristics. Both of them ruled for almost the same duration. The only difference between them was the fact that while Mansoor killed people even after granting them *aman* (peace and safety), Abdul Malik remained spotless on this point.

### **Mahdi bin Mansoor**

Mohammad Al-Mahdi bin Mansoor's familiar name (*kunya*) was Abu Abdullah. He was born in Edaj in 126 A.H. His mother's name was Unun Musa Arwa bint Mansoor Himyari. Mahdi was very generous, widely admired, true in faith, popular and a handsome man. His father put him under the charge and tutelage of a number of scholars. When Mahdi was 15 years old, Mansoor sent him to put down the mutiny caused by Abdul Jabbar bin Abdur-Rahman. In 141 A.H., he was sent to Khorasan. When he returned from there in 144 A.H., Mansoor had him married to his niece, Saffah's daughter. He made him the heir-apparent in 144 A.H. and sent him to Rayy as the administrator of the Southern and Western parts of Khorasan. He appointed him Amir al-Hajj (leader of the pilgrimage) in 153 A.H. and following his father's death in 158 A.H., he ascended the throne of the caliphate in Baghdad. When the people took *bay'at* (pledge or oath of allegiance) with him in Baghdad, he climbed up the pulpit (the

pulpit in mosques is generally raised so the whole congregation can see the Imam) and delivered the following sermon:

"The man whom you call Amir al-Muminin (Leader of the true believers) is nothing but a slave. When somebody calls him, he responds and complies. It is Allāh Who is the Protector of the Amir al-Muminin. It is from Allāh only that I seek help in order to run the work of the caliphate. Just as you express your sense of obedience with your tongue, co-operate with me with your soul also so that you might become the beneficiaries of welfare in this world and in the world hereafter. Don't oppose those who propagate justice. I shall remove obstructions from your way and dedicate my whole life serving you and punishing those among you who are criminals and wrongdoers."

The first thing that Mahdi did after taking over as caliph was to release all the captives in Mansoor's jail. Only those who were rebels, usurpers and murderers were not freed. Among the captives set free was Yaqub bin Dawood. Those who were not released included Hasan bin Ibrahim bin Abdullah bin Hasan bin Hasan. As mentioned earlier, both Hasan and Yaqub were arrested in Basra together following Ibrahim's death and imprisoned. Yaqub's father Dawood was from among the liberated slaves of Banu Sulaim. He was Nasr bin Sayyar's head-clerk in Khorasan. Dawood had two sons, Yaqub and Ali. Both were scholars and extremely clever and wise. When Banu Abbas came into power, Banu Sulaim was subjected to humiliation. Yaqub and Ali who were from Banu Sulaim were neglected though they merited serious attention by virtue of their qualifications. When Mohammad Mahdi and Ibrahim began to invite the people to support them against Banu Abbas, Yaqub joined them and invited people to support Mohammad Mahdi and Ibrahim, until he was imprisoned along with Hasan bin Ibrahim. After his release from the jail, Yaqub was found out that Hasan bin Ibrahim was trying to escape from jail. He informed caliph Mahdi. Mahdi transferred Hasan to another jail but he escaped anyway. Mahdi called Yaqub to him and consulted with him about Hasan. Yaqub said, "If you grant safety and pardon to him, I can present him before you." Mahdi granted it and Yaqub brought Hasan before him. He had the assurance from Mahdi that

Hasan would be able to visit the caliph in court and out of court. The occasion arose and Mahdi made Hasan his friend and gave him 100,000 dirhams. After a few days, Mahdi deposed Abu Abdullah, his minister since the time he was declared heir-apparent, and replaced him with Yaqub. Mahdi displayed a sense of justice and recognition of merit by honoring Yaqub and Hasan and established their love for him in their hearts even though they were his former enemies. The greatest danger to the caliphate of the Abbasids was from the members of Mohammad Mahdi and Ibrahim's group who had joined hands with Yahya bin Zaid and they all were intent on bringing about the fall of Banu Abbas. By making Yaqub his minister, Mahdi avoided all of these dangers, for Yaqub had links with both of these groups. He appointed them to high posts in the government and thus kept them from opposing the caliphate and dampened their enthusiasm for opposition.

### **The Rise of Hakeem Muqanna**

In 159 A.H., the first year of Mahdi's caliphate an inhabitant of Merv named Hakeem Muqanna made a mask of gold and put it on his face. He claimed that he was Allāh. He believed that Allāh created Adam and entered his body, then entered Noah's body, then entered Abu Muslim's body and Hashim's body. He believed in transmigration and said, "Allāh's soul is within me, He has entered my body." His belief was the same as held by the people of Ravind who had created perversions in the religion at Hashmīyah in the time of Mansoor. They were all members of Abu Muslim's group and were the aberrations of his strange and deviant form of propagation. Whoever Abu Muslim met, he presented his peculiar form of propagation to him adapting it to the demands of the situation and the person concerned. Abu Muslim's ultimate motives were political and not religious and he bent everything to suit those ends, even Allah's religion. All these deviated sects were the consequences of using the Prophet's family for political ends in different forms. Hakeem Muqanna also believed that Yahya bin Zaid (who was from the Prophet's family) was not killed but went into hiding and was expected to reappear to take revenge and exterminate his enemies. Many Khorasanis became his followers and began to make prostration to him (in Islam the act of prostration is due only to Allah and not to any creation). He stayed in the fort of



Basām and Sanjar (in modern day Uzbekistan). The people of Bukhara, Safhad and Turkistan supported him and started slaughtering the Muslims. The administrators of those regions like Abu An Noman, Junaid and Laith bin Nasr bin Sayyar fought against them. Laith's brother Mohammad bin Nasr and nephew Hasan bin Tamim were killed in the fight. When Mahdi came to know of it, he sent Jibrail bin Yahya to help them. He deputed Jibrail's brother Yazid to punish the insurgents of Bukhara and Safhad. First Bukhara and Safhad were invaded. After 4 months of fighting the forts of Bukhara were captured by the Muslims. 700 rebels were killed and the rest fled to Muqanna. After a short time, Mahdi dispatched Abu Aun to attack Muqanna but those commanders could not defeat Muqanna. Then Mu'az bin Muslim was sent to defeat him. The officer of Mu'az bin Muslim's vanguard was Sayeed Huraitli. Then Oqba bin Muslim was also ordered to join him. These commanders led a very bitter attack on Muqanna and put him to flight and encircled him in the fort of Basām. During the fight, there appeared some differences between Mu'az and Sayeed. Sayeed wrote to Mahdi and secured his permission to do away with Muqanna all alone. Muqanna was besieged along with 20,000 of his men. The besieged asked Sayeed Huraitli for a guarantee of safety. Sayeed granted it and they came out of the fort leaving only 2,000 men with Muqanna. When Muqanna was certain of his failure, he made a fire and pushed all the members of his family into it and then he himself jumped into it and died. The Muslims entered the fort, took Muqanna's dead body out of the fire, cut off his head and sent it to Mahdi.

### **Change, Deposition and Appointment of Administrators**

In 155 A.H. Mahdi deposed his uncle Ismail from the government of Kufa and appointed Ishaq bin Sabah Kindi Ash-athi. He removed Sayeed, Da'laj and Obaidullah bin Hasan from the government and leadership of Basra and appointed Abdul Malik bin Dhubyan Numairi. Similarly the same year he deposed Qasam bin Abbas from the government of Yamama and appointed Fadal bin Saleh, deposed Matar (Mansoor's liberated slave) from the government of Egypt and appointed Abu Hamza Mohammad bin Sulaiman, removed Abdus



Samad bin Ali from the government of Madinah and appointed Mohammad bin Abdullah Kasiri. Soon after Mohammad bin Abdullah was also removed and replaced by Zafar bin Asim Hilali. The same year Mahdi sent Mabad bin Khalil as the governor of Sindh. When Humaid bin Qahlab who was the governor of Qahistan died the same year, that is 159 A.H. its government was handed over to Abu Aun Abdul Malik bin Yazid. At the end of the same year Sayeed bin Khalil died and the government of Sindh was taken over by Ruh bin Hâtim.

In 160 A.H., Abu Aun Abdul Malik was deposed as a punishment. His place was taken by Mu'âz bin Muslim. Sistan was assigned to Hamza bin Yahya and Samarkand to Jibrail bin Yahya. During his regime, Jibrail built the fort and erected fencing in Khorasan. The same year Sindh was taken over by Bustam bin Amr. In 161 A.H., Mahdi gave the governorship of Sindh to Nasr bin Mohammad bin Ash-ath. The same year Abdus Samad bin Ali was sent to Jazirah. Isa bin Luqman to Egypt and Bustam bin Amr to Azerbaijan after being deposed from the governorship of Sindh. The same year he appointed Yahya bin Khalid Barmk as the tutor of his son, Haroon and he sent Sulaiman bin Raja to Egypt as governor in place of Mohammad bin Sulaiman.

### **The expedition of Bârbad**

It was during the regime of caliph Mahdi that a naval expedition was sent to India. Abdul Malik bin Shahab Masmaj with an army boarded the ships in the Persian Gulf and moved along the Indian coast. They landed in Bârbad and waged a battle and many Bârbad men were killed. Only 20 Muslims lost their lives but an epidemic broke out among the Muslim soldiers leading to the death of 1000 of them. They then turned their boats towards Persia. They met with a violent storm near the Persian coast that shattered several boats and many soldiers were downed.

### **Hadi bin Mahdi as Crown Prince**

As has previously been mentioned, Isa bin Musa lived at Rahbah adjacent to Kufa, visited Kufa to perform his Friday and Eid prayers and spent all his time at his village quietly and without involving

himself with the affairs of others. It has also been recorded that Abdullah Saffah had made Isa heir apparent after Mansoor and Mansoor made his son Mahdi supersede Isa. Isa bin Musa was the rightful heir apparent after Mahdi but in the first year of his caliphate Mahdi's advisers and supporters advised him to nominate his son Hadi as his heir-apparent in place of Musa. Mahdi requested Isa to visit Baghdad but Isa refused. Mahdi issued standing orders to the governor of Kufa to harass him but as Isa had already been leading a secluded life, the governor did not get an opportunity to carry out his orders. Then Mahdi wrote a strict letter to Isa but he did not reply. Then Mahdi sent his uncle Abbas to him to bring him into his presence. Even then, Isa refused. At last, Mahdi deputed two commanders to go and bring him. Compelled in this way, Isa came to Baghdad and lodged with Mohammad bin Sulaiman. He visited Mahdi's court from time to time but he went there silently, kept silent while there and returned silently from there. At last, they started torturing him and Mohammad bin Sulaiman himself wanted to compel him to abdicate. Isa made excuses about the pledge, which he had taken at the time of succession. Mahdi called the legal scholars. They gave a religious verdict that Isa might retire from the succession after paying compensation for breaking his oath. Mahdi gave him 10,000 dirhams and estates at Zab and Kaskar in lieu thereof. Isa retired from the succession on 26 Muharram 160 A.H. and took the oath for Hadi as the heir apparent. The next day Mahdi held an open court, took the oath from the officials of the government, went to the Central Mosque and delivered a sermon informing the people of Isa's abdication and Hadi's succession. Isa admitted his retirement from the succession and the people took oath for Hadi as the heir apparent.

### **Mahdi's Hajj**

In Dhul Qada 160 A.H., Mahdi made preparations for Hajj and left his son Hadi as his deputy in Baghdad. He had Hadi's maternal uncle Yazid bin Mansoor live with Hadi and arranged for his second son, Haroon and a few relatives, to live in Hadi's company. He himself left for Makkah along with his minister Yaqub bin Dawood. After arriving in Makkah, he had all the old covers of the Ka'bah removed and covered it with a new and expensive cover (Arabic: Kiswah). He

distributed clothes to 150,000 paupers and extended the Prophet's Mosque. On his return journey, he brought 500 families from the Ansars to Iraq with him, settled them there, gave them estates, fixed salaries for them and deployed them as his bodyguards. He had rest houses constructed along the roads to Makkah. Every house was fitted with a cistern and a well. He entrusted the supervision of all this work to Yaqtan bin Musa. He issued orders for the extension of the Basra mosque and reconstruction of its pulpit.

### **Skirmishes in Undulus (Spain)**

The governor of North Africa representing Mahdi was Abdur Rahman bin Habib Fahri. He took a group of Berbers, landed at Murcia, on the southeastern portion of the Spanish Mediterranean coast. Abdur Rahman Fahri invited the governor of the province, Sulaiman bin Yaqtan, to follow the Abbasid caliphate, he did not reply to the letter of invitation. Abdur Rahman Fahri attacked Sulaiman's territory but was defeated and pushed back. In the meantime, Amir Abdur Rahman the Umayyah ruler of Spain arrived with an army. First, he burned Abdur Rahman Fahri's boats on the coast so he could not get away. Then he turned his army to face him. Abdur Rahman Fahri became nervous and climbed up Mount Valencia. Amir Abdur Rahman announced that whosoever brought Abdur Rahman Fahri's head to him he would be given 1000 dinars. The news reached the ears of one of Abdur Rahman Fahri's Berbers. He cut off his head in a state of greed, took it to Amir Abdur Rahman and received the reward. Amir Abdur Rahman was agitated at the invasion of the Abbasids. He decided to retaliate by invading the Syrian coast and punish the Abbasid caliph for his intrusion into Spain. But during that same time Hasan bin Yahya bin Sayeed bin Sâd bin Uthman Ansari revolted in Spain and as a result Amir Abdur Rahman had to turn his attention to him and postpone his plan to attack Syria. The dynasty of Banu Umayyah ruled in Spain from the time of Caliph Mansoor Abbasi and it was the second headquarters of the Islamic authority. The period of Abbasids has been begun in our narrative and we will finish recording the details of the rulers of the Abbasid Caliphate as they continued to rule over the entire Islamic world except for Spain.

The political conditions of Spain will be narrated separately from its beginning in a following section.

### **The Roman Expedition and Haroon's attack**

In 163 A.H., Mahdi collected soldiers from Khorasan and other provinces and left Baghdad with the intention of declaring Jihad against the Romans on 1 Rajab 163 A.H. On the previous day Mahdi's uncle Isa bin Ali died. He left Hadi in Baghdad as his deputy and took Haroon with him. He passed through Mousil and Jazirah, deposed and imprisoned the governor of the province Abdus Samad bin Ali. He then made his son Haroon the ruler of Azerbaijan, Armenia and all the western territories and gave the authority of Jazirah to Abdullah bin Saleh. The cause that led to the invasion of the Romans was that in 162 A.H. the Romans made incursions into Islamic territory and destroyed some Muslim cities. Caliph Mahdi himself launched the attack. During the journey when he came in front of Maslama bin Abdul Malik's fort, Mahdi's uncle Abbas bin Ali said to Mahdi, "Once when your grandfather Mohammad bin Ali passed this way, Maslama had invited him to a feast and presented 1000 dinars to him." When Mahdi heard this, he sent for Maslama's sons, slaves and all his relatives and gave them 20,000 dinars and fixed salaries for them. He reached Halab and stopped there and sent Haroon along with the military commanders ahead. Haroon was accompanied by Isa bin Musa, Abdul Malik bin Saleh, Hasan bin Qahtaba, Rabi bin Yunus and Yahya bin Khalid Barmuk. Haroon was entrusted with the command and also the supply and provision of foodstuffs. He moved forward and laid a siege to the Roman forts and conquered several of them in succession. In the mean time, Mahdi searched for and killed apostates who left Islam and invented various heresies to promote their political power in the vicinity of Halab. Haroon returned victorious. Mahdi went to Jerusalem on pilgrimage with Haroon. They perform their Salat in the Aqsa Mosque and returned to Baghdad. When Mahdi had made Haroon the governor of Azerbaijan and Armenia, he had handed over the portfolios of finance and foreign affairs to Hasan bin Thabit and Yahya bin Khalid Barmuk respectively.

## **Haroon's Second Invasion Against the Romans**

In 164 A.H., Abdul Kabeer bin Abdur Rahman led an attack on the Romans, religious leaders like Michael and Tara Armani faced him with a 90,000 men and Abdul Kabeer returned back without combat. This incident ended the terror, which the Muslim's invasion on the Romans had created in 163 A.H. When Mahdi heard the news, he imprisoned Abdul Kabeer, and in 165 A.H., he sent his son Haroon to invade the Romans and asked his chief of security and confidant Rabi to accompany him. Haroon attacked the Romans with a 100,000 man army and continued defeating the Romans and destroying their cities until he reached Constantinople. At that time, Constantinople was ruled over by Ghustah, the widow of Emperor Elevik who ruled on behalf of her underage son. The Romans agreed to a compromise and paid 70,000 dinars annually as Jizyah for three years and it was agreed that the Muslims would be allowed to transact business in the markets of Constantinople. Prior to that reconciliation, the Muslims had killed 56,000 Romans and captured 600. That year Mahdi made Haroon the administrator in charge of all the Western territories.

In 166 A.H., Caliph Mahdi made his son Haroon heir apparent after Hadi and took the oath from the people for Haroon's succession and gave him the title *Rasheed*, the guide. The same year he inaugurated postal services using mules and camels to receive information and communicate instructions to those territories. The same year he appointed Abu Yusuf the chief justice of Basra.

In 167 A.H. Isa bin Musa died in Kufa. The same year saw the rise of apostates who left Islam and invented various heresies to promote their political power in various places. First Mahdi silenced them by arguments and then prepared to kill them. Wherever he heard they existed, he hastened to do away with them. In between Yamamah and Bahrain, they grew in power. They became atheists, gave up prayer, cared little for what was lawful or unlawful in religion, committed looting and murder and to accomplish this blocked the roads. Caliph Mahdi had them massacred openly when they engaged in these criminal acts. He pursued them and exterminated them totally. Among his achievements, the extermination of this type of criminals

was very remarkable. The same year he extended the area around the holy Ka'bah by purchasing the adjoining buildings.

### **Hadi's Invasion of Jurjān**

In 167 A.H., news came that Tabristanis rose in mutiny. The caliph dispatched his son Hadi to punish him. The flag of his army was held by Mohammad bin Jameel. Hadi established peace in Tabristan and Jurjān and punished the insurgents.

In 168 A.H., the Romans committed a breach of the agreement they had with the Muslims four months before the time of its expiry. Hearing this news the ruler of Jazirah and Qansareen, Ali bin Sulaiman, sent Yazid bin Badr bin Batāl with a large army to Constantinople. He returned with a large quantity of spoils of war.

### **Mahdi's Death**

Experience let Mahdi understand that his second son Haroon was more capable and efficient in political affairs than Hadi. In 168 A.H., he made up his mind to supersede Hadi in the matter of succession and put Haroon in his place by deposing Hadi and to take the people's oath for Haroon. At that time, Hadi was in Jurjān. Mahdi sent a messenger to bring him to Baghdad. Hadi was rude and impertinent to the messenger, beat him up and turned him out of his court and did not start to prepare to leave Jurjān for Baghdad to comply with his father's orders. Hearing of this Mahdi left for Jurjān but as soon as he reached Basbazān, he breathed his last on 22 Muharram 169 A.H. corresponding to August 785 AD. Haroon Rasheed accompanied his father on the journey and led the funeral prayer and sent news of their father's death to his brother at Jurjān. Hadi took the oath from the soldiers for his own caliphate and a circular regarding Mahdi's death and Hadi's accession to the caliphate was sent to all the administrators. Twenty days later, he left Jurjān and arrived in Baghdad and took his seat on the throne of the caliphate he invested Rabi, the chief of security, with the robe of minister. Rabi died a few days later.

Caliph Mahdi was very noble hearted, pious, generous, even

tempered, brave and gentle among the Abbasid caliphs. During his father's caliphate, he had seen with his own eyes the bloodshed of the Aliwites, which he did not consider as good for the government. By his good behavior and works of public welfare, he wanted to endear himself to the masses and thereby strengthen his authority. He regarded fear, oppression, violence and fury as quite unnecessary. So, he began to sit in the company of his courtiers and companions without any inhibition. During Mansoor's regime, the courtiers and companions used to sit behind a curtain and the caliph heard their voices and they heard his. They were not visible to others. During his regime, Caliph Mahdi did not pass the death sentence against any Hashmite. He used to imprison those from Banu Hashim who deserved capital punishment. He was a formidable enemy of the apostates and never spared one from death yet Yaqub bin Fadi, a Hashimite turned apostate who confessed himself to be so was only imprisoned by him and Mahdi said to his heir apparent Hadi, "When you take over as caliph, you may kill him. I am committed to my oath and so I cannot kill him." As soon as Hadi became caliph, he killed him. Mahdi cared very much for the traditions and deeds of the Prophet ﷺ. He had all the special constructions in the mosques designed for the caliphs demolished as they were against the Prophet's way. Wherever there were pulpits higher than that of the Prophet's it was brought down. He devoted most of his time in prayer. He was very tolerant and eloquent.

Everybody could enter his court freely. In administrative affairs, he was extremely active and clever. He used to visit his slaves and servants when they were sick. Sometimes people filed cases against him and in response to the judge's order he had to appear before the judge as a defendant and implemented the judgment passed against himself. A scholar of repute, Shareek, visited him. Mahdi said to him, "You have to accept either of the three things. Accept the post of judge or teach my sons or take your meal with me." Qadi Shareek thought over it a little and then said, "Eating with you is much easier." So a cloth was spread and a variety of dishes were served. When the eating was over, the royal cook said, "Now you are trapped." and it happened accordingly. After listening to the caliph, he not only accepted the post of the judge but also trained his sons. Whenever

Mahdi visited Basra, he led the prayer at the Central Mosque. One day the people stood up for prayer. Then an Arab beduine came late and he missed the congregational prayer. He said to Mahdi, "I wanted to perform my prayer behind you but it was not possible." Mahdi ordered that they should wait for that beduine at the time of every prayer. So, at Asr time Mahdi stood up under the arch and did not allow the prayer to be started until the beduine turned up. The people were astonished at this courtesy. Mahdi was the first caliph to have recited the following verse in his sermon:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

Allāh sends His *Salāt* (Graces, Honors, Blessings, Mercy) on the Prophet and also His angels. O you who believe! Send your *Salāt* on (ask Allāh to bless) him, and greet him with the Islamic way of greeting. (Q.33:56)

After him, the scholars and preachers of sermons subsequently declared it as integral part of the sermon.

### Hadi bin Mahdi

Hadi bin Mahdi bin Mansoor's mother was Khaizrān. He was born in Rayy in 147 A.H. Khaizran was a Barber shave girl owned by Mahdi. After Hadi and Haroon were born of her, he freed her and married her in 159 A.H. When Caliph Hadi ascended to the caliphate he punished the apostates in deference to his father's will and did not hesitate in eliminating them. At the time of Caliph Hadi's ascension, the following were the administrators of the provinces and states:

In Madinah: Omar bin Abdul Aziz bin Obaidullah bin Abdullah bin Omar bin Khattab.

In Yemen: Ibrahim bin Muslim bin Qutaiba.

In Makkah and Taif: Abdullah bin Qatham.

In Yamamah and Bahrain: Sowaid Qaid Khorasani.

In Oman: Hasan bin Sulaim Hawari.

In Kufa: Musa bin Isa.

In Basra: Ibn Sulaiman.



In Jurjān: Caliph Hadi's liberated slave Hajja.

In Qomas: Zeyad bin Hasān.

In Tabristan: Saleh bin Sheikh bin Ornairah Asadi.

In Mousil: Hashim bin Sayeed bin Khalid.

Hadi had deposed Hashim for his rude behavior and deputed Abdul Malik bin Saleh bin Ali Hashmi in Mousil.

## **The Revolt of Husain bin Ali**

Husain bin Ali bin Hasan Muthallath bin Hasan Muthanna bin Ali bin Abi Talib and Hasan bin Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Hasan, his uncle Yahya bin Abdullah bin Hasan and other descendants of Abu Talib had joined hands in revolting against the Abbasid government and it was agreed that the season of Hajj in 159 A.H. was the most suitable time for the revolt. But before the Hajj season came there was a quarrel between them and the governor of Madinah Omar bin Abdul Aziz bin Obaidullah. They rebelled, encircled the governor's house and began to take the oath at Hasan bin Ali bin Hasan Muthallath's hands and the people of Madinah joined it. In the meanwhile, Khalid Yazidi arrived with 200 men. On the other side Omar bin Abdul Aziz also came out of the siege and taking a group with him came to the mosque where the oath for Hasan bin Ali's was going on. Those who were inside the mosque fought. In this fight, Khalid Yazidi and Idris were killed at the hands of Abdullah bin Hasan's sons. With his death, all were defeated and Husain bin Ali's group broke open the door of the treasury and looted the government funds. The next day the supporters of Banu Abbas rallied and fought again. The fighting continued in Madinah for several days. At last, Husain bin Ali expelled all his opponents and took full control of Madinah. He stayed in Madinah for 21 days and then left for Makkah. After arriving in Makkah, he made a proclamation that those slaves who came to him, would be freed. This induced a group of slaves to rally round him. That same year Sulaiman bin Mansoor bin Sulaiman bin Ali, Abbas bin Mohammad bin Ali, Musa and Ismail (Isa bin Musa's sons) all belonging to the Abbasid dynasty had come for Hajj. After their departure, Hadi came to know about Husain bin Ali's

revolt. Hadi immediately wrote to Mohammad bin Sulaiman to fight Husain bin Ali with his men. Mohammad bin Sulaiman had brought a small army with him. He marshaled the troops in battle array at Towa and reached Makkah and performed Umrah, (the small pilgrimage). All the Abbasid chiefs who came from different provinces and territories joined Mohammad Sulaiman, they arrayed and fought at Fakh on 8<sup>th</sup> Dhul Hijja. Many men were killed. At last, Husain bin Ali suffered defeat and his men fled. After some time a man brought Husain bin Ali's head. About 100 heads of his men were collected that included Sulaiman's (Mohammad Mahdi's brother). The defeated took to flight and joined the pilgrims. Mohammad bin Sulaiman proclaimed pardon and safety for all. Hasan bin Mohammad bin Abdullah was arrested after the proclamation. He was killed by Musa bin Isa. Mohammad bin Sulaiman was angered by this because it was contrary to the promise he had given. When Hadi was informed, he confiscated Musa bin Isa's property. During this fight, Idris bin Abdullah bin Hasan bin Hasan bin Ali bin Abi Talib (Mohammad Mahdi's brother) escaped and went to Egypt. There Saleh bin Mansoor's liberated slave Wazeh, who was the officer of the Postal Department and sympathized with the descendants of Abi Talib, gave him a fast horse and sent him to the western territories. Idris reached the city of Dalilah located on the outskirts of Tangier and started propagating to the Berbers. The account of his descendants will be taken up separately later on in the narrative. A few days later Caliph Hadi was informed that Wazeh had allowed Idris to escape to the western territories. So, Hadi had Wazeh and his men arrested and killed. Idris bin Abdullah's second brother Yahya bin Abdullah escaped from Fakh and went to Delam.

### **Hadi's Death**

Soon after taking over as caliph Hadi became busy trying to depose his brother Haroon from succession and install his own son Jafar in his place. Yahya bin Khalid bin Barmuk was Haroon Rasheed's tutor, the Prime Minister and in charge of all expeditions. He tried to make Hadi see reason and abstain from this act. He succeeded in preventing him from doing so several times but Hadi's other companions repeatedly insisted on his deposing Haroon and replacing him with his son Jafar.

Yahya convinced him saying, "Your son is still underage. If you die today, the officials of the sultanate will never recognize his caliphate and government and there will follow disturbances. Your father, Mahdi nominated Haroon as crown prince after you. If you make Jafar the heir apparent after Haroon, there will be no danger. If Jafar comes of age in your life time and displays his capability, I shall persuade Haroon to abdicate in favor of Jafar." Hadi was satisfied with the argument. But the officials of the government who were against Haroon continued to try to persuade Hadi until Haroon was subjected to persecution. When Yahya came to know about it, he advised Haroon to go somewhere on the pretext of hunting and maintain a distance from Hadi. So, Haroon secured the permission for hunting and went to the palace of Muqatil. When Hadi wanted to recall him, he said he was ill and could not come to him. During the same period, Hadi totally stopped his mother Khaizran from intervening in matters of the administrators and deprived her of all the powers she had enjoyed since Mahdi's regime. The estrangement between the mother and the son took such an ugly turn that they became mortal enemies to each other. When she came to know through Yahya that Hadi was after Haroon's life to make his own son Jafar heir apparent, she became a formidable enemy to Hadi for love of Haroon. Now instead of one supporter Yahya, Khaizran also became Haroon's supporter. When Haroon refused to present himself before Hadi, he left for Mousil. When he returned, Haroon was with him. Hadi fell ill on the way and died after three days on Sunday night 14 Rabia al-Awwal 170 A.H. corresponding to 786 AD at Isabad. He ruled for one year and three months. Hadi's sudden death led the people to believe that Khaizran had Hadi poisoned to death by her slave girl. Since Hadi was ill, poisoning did not find any credibility. Yahya bin Khalid was her accomplice in the matter and it is Allāh who really knows.

Hadi introduced postal service in between Jurjān and Baghdad. He was generous, even tempered and had a tendency towards oppression. He was not unmindful of statecraft and politics. He was stout and strong and soldier-like. He had a short span of life and the duration of his caliphate was also very short. So his habits and nature were not fully exposed.

### **Abu Jafar Haroon Rasheed bin Mahdi**

Abu Jafar Haroon Rasheed bin Mahdi bin Mansoor bin Mohammad bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas was born of Khaizran at Rayy in 148 A.H. A week before Yahya bin Khalid's son Fadal bin Yahya was born. Haroon's mother Khaizran suckled Fadal and Fadal's mother suckled Haroon, by Islamic law this made them foster brothers. Haroon Rasheed succeeded to the caliphate on Sunday 14 Rabia al-Awwal 170 A.H. after his brother's death. The same night his son Mamoon was born. It is strange that the same night a caliph died, the second caliph ascended to the throne and the third one was born. Haroon Rasheed's familiar name, *kunya*, was Abu Musa followed by Abu Jafar later on. He was a tall and handsome man.

Soon after coming into power, Haroon Rasheed made Yahya bin Khalid Barmuk his Prime Minister. He not only entrusted him with the portfolio of this ministry but also gave him the caliph's ring and this made him the most important man in matters of expeditions of the government. Khaizran who had been living in isolation from all administrative activities in Hadi's time, again resumed her involvement in matters of government. Assumption of authority by Yahya and Khaizran does not signify that Haroon Rasheed remained unconcerned with the business of the state. He rather wanted to encourage and honor both Yahya and Khaizran. He believed them to be his real supporters and relied upon their opinion. It was very wise and intelligent on the part of a 23-year-old youth that he selected for his minister a man who was very suited for that high post.

After taking the reigns of the caliphate in his hands, Haroon Rasheed put all his efforts into strengthening the system of government by means of dismissals, appointments, changes and transfers. He replaced Omar bin Abdul Aziz bin Obaidullah by Ishaq bin Sulaiman as the governor of Madinah. He sent Ruh bin Hatim to North Africa as its governor. He separated the border areas from Jazirah and Qansareen and formed a new Province named Awasim. In the first year of his caliphate, he went for Hajj when the season came. He made a parade of his generosity in Holy Cities.

He deputed Ruh bin Saleh to collect *Zakat*, the wealth tax, from Banu Taghlab in 171 A.H. There cropped up dissension between Ruh and Banu Taghlab. Ruh collected an army to punish them but Banu Taghlab launched a night attack on Ruh and killed him.

Idris bin Abdullah has already been mentioned and his fleeing from the battle of Fakh to the western territories during Hadi's regime. He started propagating his leadership among the Berbers, revolted in the city of Dalilah in 172 A.H., took the oath from the people openly and founded his own government in Morocco. That was the first government the Allawiites were able to establish, and they succeeded in Morocco - Andulus (Spain) in the Islamic world was a separate country beyond the jurisdiction of the Abbasid caliphate. Now another country Morocco also went out of their control. At the receipt of the news Haroon Rasheed sent his slave Sulaiman bin Jareer popularly known as Shumakh to Morocco alone to kill Idris bin Abdullah. Shumakh reached there, took the oath for his caliphate, endeared himself to him by criticizing and abusing Haroon Rasheed and waited for a chance. In 177 A.H., he poisoned him to death and returned. However, the government Idris founded continued. After his death, a son was born to his slave girl who was also named Idris by the Berbers and they made him their leader. The details about the Idrisi government will follow later. After a short time, the Abbasid authority was destroyed in Tunis and a separate government was established there. The Abbasid caliphate remained there only as a figurehead. In this way, a large part of their territory went out of the control of the caliphate of the Abbasids.

In 172 A.H. Mohammad bin Sulaiman, the governor of Basra died. Haroon Rasheed confiscated all his property and deposited it in the treasury. Prior to this, Mohammad bin Sulaiman's brother Jafar bin Sulaiman usurped much of the Muslims' wealth and accumulated huge amounts of money for himself. After Mohammad bin Sulaiman's death, Jafar staked his claim to the legacy. Haroon Rasheed deputed Ishaq bin Sulaiman as the governor of Sindh and Makran and appointed Yusuf bin Imam Abu Yusuf to the post of judge in the lifetime of Abu Yusuf.

## **Ameen as the Crown Prince**

Haroon Rasheed's son Mamoon's birth has been recorded above, he was born at the time of Haroon Rasheed's ascension to the throne in 170 A.H. But Mamoon was born of Marjal, a Zoroastrian slave girl. The same year his second son Mohammad Ameen was born to his wife Zubaidah Khatoon bint Jafar bint Mansoor bin Mohammad bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas. Ameen's tutor was Fadal bin Khalid bin Barmuk and Mamoon's tutor was Jafar bin Yahya bin Khalid bin Barmuk. Fadal wanted Haroon Rasheed to make Ameen his heir apparent and Jafar wanted Mamoon. Because Ameen was born of a woman from Banu Hashim, Zubaidah Khatoon, Haroon Rasheed's beloved wife also exerted all her effort in Ameen's favor. So, in 175 A.H. while Ameen was only five years old, Haroon Rasheed took the oath for his succession.

The same year Haroon Rasheed deposed Abbas bin Jafar bin Mohammad bin Ash-ath, the governor of Khorasan, and appointed Khalid bin Ata Kindi in his place.

## **The Revolt of Yahya bin Abdullah**

Mention has been made above that Idris and Yahya, sons of Abdullah bin Hasan and brothers of Mohammad Mahdi (Nafs Zakiya) had fled from the battle of Fakh. Idris went to the western territories and occupied Morocco as has been mentioned above. Yahya bin Abdullah rebelled against the caliphate of the Abbasids at Delam. People from all sides rallied round him and took the oath for him, making him a formidable power. Haroon Rasheed was frightened on hearing about it and sent Fadal bin Yahya along with a 50,000 man army to put down that trouble. Along with the army, he endowed him with the governorship of Jurjan, Tabristan and Rayy. Fadal bin Yahya left Baghdad and reached Talqan and wrote a letter to Yahya bin Abdullah and asked him to obey the caliph and assured him of rewards and landed estates if he reconciled with him. Yahya replied that he was ready to make peace with Haroon Rasheed provided he wrote the treaty of peace with his pen and had the signatures of legal scholars and judges and the chiefs of Banu Hashim as witnesses. Fadal

bin Yahya informed Haroon Rasheed of all these details. Haroon Rasheed was very glad. He wrote the treaty with his own hand duly signed by the persons requested and sent it to Fadal with gifts. Fadal sent it to Yahya bin Abdullah and both Yahya and Fadal left for Baghdad. In the peace treaty the ruler of Delam who extended his hospitality to Yahya bin Abdullah by lodging him at his fort and helped him in all possible ways, was promised 1000,000 dirhams if he persuaded Yahya bin Abdullah to sign the treaty of compromise. When Yahya and Fadal reached Baghdad, Haroon Rasheed received Fadal warmly, fixed landed estates for him and gave him a reward. Fadal was given a promotion and Yahya bin Abdullah was entrusted to Fadal bin Yahya and he began to live in Baghdad under the care of Fadal.

In 176 A.H., Haroon Rasheed received news that the Egyptian governor Musa bin Isa was influenced by the Alwis propaganda and that he was busy maneuvering a revolution against the caliphate. So, he made Jafar bin Yahya the supervisor of Egypt. Jafar bin Yahya proposed Omar bin Mehran whose familiar name was Abu Hafs be named governor of Egypt. He accepted it on the condition that when he completed the arrangements for Egypt and deposited all the arrears of taxes with the treasury, he would be at liberty to return and that he would not have to seek permission to do so. Haroon Rasheed agreed to the condition and wrote the certificate of governorship and handed it over to him. He went to Egypt, took charge from Musa bin Isa and after collecting all the taxes came back to Baghdad. Haroon Rasheed then sent Ishaq bin Sulaiman to Egypt as its governor.

### **Unrest in Syria**

In 176 A.H., the civil wars between Banu Mudar and the Yemaniyah tribes took a dangerous turn. When the governor of Damascus Abdus Samad bin Ali failed to stamp out the trouble, Haroon Rasheed deposed him and replaced him with Ibrahim bin Saleh. Ibrahim supported and helped the Yemaniyah tribes with the result that the disturbance continued for a long time. Then the Mudar tribe captured Damascus and dethroned and suspended the governor. Finally, Haroon Rasheed sent Jafar bin Yahya Barmuk to Syria. He brought the riots under control and came back to the capital Baghdad.

## **Rise of Attâf bin Sufyan**

In 177 A.H. Attâf bin Sufyan staged an uprising and captured Mousil and the surrounding states. He besieged and imprisoned the governor of Mousil in the governor's headquarters and started collecting taxes using 4,000 warriors who were with him to convince anyone who doubted his right to collect taxes. Hearing of this Haroon Rasheed took an army from Baghdad and went towards him. Attâf fled to Armenia. Haroon Rasheed pulled down the city walls of Mousil. But he had to return to Baghdad upon receiving the news of uprisings in both Egypt and Khorasan. Attâf left Armenia and went to Raqah, settled there and began to live a life of seclusion. The same year Abdur Razzaq bin Humaid Dhâlbi invaded the Romans and returned after punishing them.

## **Uprising in Egypt**

At the end of 177 A.H., the news came that in Egypt some tribes were ready to rebel. The Egyptian governor Ishaq bin Sulaiman tried to stamp it out-but in 178 A.H. the rebels fought and defeated him. In those days, Harsimah bin Ayun was the administrator of Palestine. Haroon Rasheed wrote to him to go to Egypt with his army and curb the unrest. He went there and defeated and forced them into obedience. Haroon Rasheed then entrusted the governorship of Egypt to him. However, after one month he was deposed and replaced by Abdul Malik bin Saleh.

## **The Mischief of the Khwarij**

The periods during which there were rebellions in Egypt, Syria, and Mousil Qais bin Dhalbah's liberated slave, Haseen Khwarji, had rebelled in Khorasan and created unrest there. The governor of Khorasan Khalid bin Ata Kindi had made Dawood bin Yazid the administrator of Sistan. He sent Uthman bin Ammarah to confront Haseen Khwarji. Haseen defeated and made him flee. Then he looted and plundered Badghais, Busanj and Herat. Then Khalid Kindi deployed a 12,000 man army to capture him. Haseen dealt a crushing defeat to that army with his 600 men and continued to



create disorder and unrest. Repeated confrontations took place but every time the Khorasani army suffered defeat. At last, in the beginning of 178 A.H., Haseen Khwarji was killed and peace was restored in Khorasan. The same year saw Zafar bin Asim invading the Roman Empire.

In Ramadan 179 A.H., caliph Haroon Rasheed performed *Umrali*, (the small pilgrimage,) combined with Hajj, (the great pilgrimage,) with the same *Ithram* (the state in which a pilgrim performs the rituals of Hajj). He went on foot from Makkah to Arafat. The same year Malik bin Anas رضى الله عنه died on 7 Rabia Thani at the age of 84 followed by Imam Abu Hanifah's son Hammad in Dhul Qada 179 A.H.

In 180 A.H., armies were sent to Mawaraunnahar to declare Jihad on the Turks and the Mongols. Ali bin Isa bin Mahan was made the governor of Khorasan. This appointment was disapproved by Haroon Rasheed's Prime Minister Yahya bin Khalid Barmuk who drew his attention to Ali bin Isa's hard temperament. But Haroon Rasheed did not agree with him and sent Ali bin Isa to Khorasan. Naturally, Yahya bin Khalid did not like anybody to unleash a reign of terror on the inhabitants of Khorasan, which was his native land. On the other hand repeated rebellions in Khorasan demanded Haroon to depute a strict man to govern and deal with Khorasan. The same year 180 A.H. there was a big earthquake, which caused the minarets of Alexandria to fall down. The same year the ruler of Spain, Hisham bin Abdur Rahman died and his son Hakam took the throne. The same year Abu Bishr Amr bin Uthman known as Sibwaihi who was the foremost scholar of syntax and an inhabitant of Baizia in Persia died.

In 181 A.H., Caliph Haroon Rasheed invaded the Roman Empire and conquered the fort of Safsaf. The same year Abdul Malik bin Saleh captured territories up to Ankara. The same year the Muslims and the Romans agreed to exchange their prisoners of war. This was the first treaty the Abbasids made with the Romans. The scholars and officials of the two governments and 30,000 soldiers along with the inhabitants of the border areas assembled at Lamas, which was situated at a distance of twelve miles from Tartus. The ruler of Tartus also came and under the aegis of Haroon Rasheed's son Qasim popularly known as Motamin and a grand assembly was held. The Romans came with

3,700 Muslim prisoners and in exchange, Motamin handed over the Christian captives to them. The same year Harsamah bin Ayun was deposed as the governor of North Africa. He came to Baghdad and was appointed officer of Haroon Rasheed's cavalry and in his place Mohammad bin Muqatil was sent to North Africa.

### **Mamoon as Heir Apparent**

It has been stated above that Haroon Rasheed in 175 A.H. had made Ameen his son from Zubaidah Khatoon his heir-apparent. At that time, both Ameen and Mamoon were five years old. No Muslim had ever made his heir apparent a boy of such young age. Now Haroon Rasheed declared his son Mamoon bin Marajal, then 12 years old, heir apparent after Ameen. He took the oath from the people that Mamoon would follow Ameen as heir to the caliphate. Mamoon's real name was Abdullah and Ameen's was Mohammad. When Mohammad was made successor in 175 A.H. he was given the title Ameen and when Abdullah was made the second successor he was given the title Mamoon. Haroon made him governor of Khorasan and its adjoining territories up to Hamdan. Then he sent for Isa bin Ali and giving him the certificate of governorship of Khorasan on behalf of Mamoon, sent him back to Khorasan. The same year on 27 Rajab 182 A.H. Imam Abu Yusuf whose name was Yaqub and had the credit of being Abu Hanifa's disciple and judge of judges of Baghdad, breathed his last.

### **The Rebellion of Wahab bin Abdullah Nisai and Hamza Khawarji**

When Ali bin Isa visited Baghdad on the occasion of the celebration of Mamoon Rasheed's succession, Abu Khaseeb Wahab bin Abdullah bin Nisai revolted and began to loot and kill people in Khorasan. When Isa bin Ali returned and pursued him, Wahab was terrified and asked for pardon and safety which he was granted, he settled down quietly. Immediately, after this incident the news broke that Hamza bin Atrak Khwarji revolted in Badghais and started conquering city after city. Herat was then ruled over by Amruiyah bin Yazid Azdi. Taking 6,000 men with him, he attacked Hamza. Hamza defeated him and killed

many of his cavalry leading ultimately to Amruiyah's death in the stampede. Then Ali bin Isa gave 10,000 soldiers to his son, Hasan bin Ali, and sent him to face Hamza. But Hasan did not fight with Hamza. Then Ali bin Isa deputed his next son, Isa bin Ali. Hamza defeated him and forced him to flee. Ali bin Isa gave Isa bin Ali a fresh army and sent him to face Hamza. The fighting took place at Nishapur and Hamza lost and fled to Qahistan. His 10,000 men were killed in the battle and only 40 men were left who fled to Qahqistan with him. Isa bin Ali deputed his warriors at Adaq, Jowin and those towns and villages which helped Hamza and then caught and killed the Khwarij until 30,000 men was put to death. Then he left Abdullah bin Abbas Nasfi at Zaranj to collect the spoils of war and marched on to Kabul and Zablistan. Abu Khaseeb Wahab bin Abdullah who had received pardon and safety and had settled down quietly in the town of Nisa, saw the field empty and made up his mind to violate the treaty. He was able to gather a group of rebels to rally round him and occupied Abyuro, Nisa, Tus and Nishapur. On the other side, Hamza started making night attacks on the villages and towns and looting travelers. In short, Hamza and Wahab did not allow Ali bin Isa and his soldiers to take any rest for four years. In the mean while Wahab at times besieged Merv. At last with Wahab's death in 186 A.H. there was peace in Khorasan. Then Ali bin Isa began to deal harshly and violently with the inhabitants there.

The same year in 182 A.H. Abdur Rahman bin Abdul Malik bin Saleh along with the summer forces left for the Roman Empire to make Jihad. The Romans after the death of their King Constantine had his mother Rebi succeed to the throne with the title Atshah. Haroon Rasheed had created fear inside the court of Constantinople the Roman queen eventually made endeavors to make peace with him and drew the attention of the Muslim commanders to peace through correspondence. It was at this time that the French King Charlemagne conquered Italy and Western Rome and had an eye on Eastern Rome, the kingdom of Constantinople. The Eastern Roman queen very intelligently made a compromise with Haroon Rasheed and in exchange for paying the Jizyah, she protected herself from the danger of Charlemagne.

## **The Riot in the Province of Armenia**

In 183 A.H., King Khakan's daughter Khazar was sent to Fadal bin Yahya. She died at Baroa. When her men returned they told her father that the Muslims had killed her treacherously. Khakan collected a huge army and rebelled at Babol starting the invasion of the Islamic territories. The Armenian governor Sayeed bin Muslim was not able to defeat him. Khakan killed 100,000 Muslims, captured thousands of them with their women and children and tortured them to such a degree that the description of these tortures is horrifying. This is regarded as one of the greatest tragedies of the Islamic world. Haroon Rasheed sent Yazid bin Mazyad to Armenia as governor prior to which, he was the administrator of Azerbaijan. Armenia was also annexed to his jurisdiction. He appointed Khuzaima bin Khazim at Nasibeen to help the Armenians. As soon as Yazid bin Mazyad's and Khuzaima bin Khazim's armies entered Armenian territory the inhabitants of Khazar fled and the Islamic forces recaptured it.

Haroon Rasheed obliged Imam Musa Kazim ibn Imam Jafar Sadiq to remain in Baghdad as a precautionary measure and did not allow him to leave it for fear that the Aliwites would make him their leader and rebel. On Friday Rajab 25 183 A.H., Imam Musa Kazim died. He was buried in Baghdad. He is regarded as the seventh Imam of the Shiites. His and Imam Mohammad Taqi's graves are located in Baghdad under a dome and are known as Kazimiah.

## **Ibrahim bin Aghlab and the city of Abbasia**

It has been stated above that Haroon Rasheed sent Mohammad bin Muqatil bin Hakam as governor after Harsima bin Ayun's resignation. Muhammad bin Muqatil was Haroon's foster brother. He put down the rebellion in Africa, which was caused by Harsima bin Ayun's departure from Africa. Mohammad bin Muqatil cleverly and intelligently disciplined them into obedient subjects but their silence and obedience was under compulsion. They were ready to revolt at any time, displeased as they were with Muqatil. The main cause of rebellion was that he always consulted the administrator of the state of Zab, Ibrahim bin Aghlab, who was in a secret conspiracy with the

chiefs of the rebels and helped them and misguided Muqatil. Due to the repeated rebellions in North Africa, 100,000 dinars from the Egyptian treasury had to be spent annually on the upkeep, expenses and defense of the North African government. Africa, instead of creating revenue, had become a liability with the expenditure of 100,000 dinars per annum. Though Mohammad bin Muqatil restored peace expenses to the Egyptian treasury continued as usual. Now Ibrahim bin Aghlab requested Haroon Rasheed to make him the governor of North Africa and in exchange not only would he eliminate the 100,000 dinars per annum expense but would also send him 400,000 dinars per annum as tax. He consulted his advisors. Harsimah bin Ayun said that there was no harm in making him the governor of Africa. So, Haroon Rasheed sent the certificate of governorship to Ibrahim in Muharram 184 A.H. Soon after arriving in North Africa he arrested all the ring leaders of the rebels who he knew well and sent them to Baghdad. That put an end to all disturbances at once. Then he founded a city near Qirwan and called it Abbasia. He made it the capital. His descendants continued to rule over it, which will be recorded later on in the narrative.

That same year 184 A.H. Haroon Rasheed handed over the governorship of Yemen and Makkah to Hammad Berberi and sent Dawood bin Yazid bin Hatim as the governor of Sindh. Similarly, he gave the governorship of Qahistan and Tabristan to Yahya Huraishi and Maharaya Razi respectively.

In 185 A.H., the inhabitants of Tabristan attacked and killed Maharaya. Then in his place Abdullah bin Sayeed Huraishi was sent. The same year saw the death of the governor of Azerbaijan and Armenia, Yazid bin Mazyad Shebani. His place was taken by his son Asad bin Yazid.

As has already been stated, Ali bin Isa was able to stamp out all rebellions in Khorasan and restore peace after Wahab bin Nisai's death in 186 A.H. Ali bin Isa was not lucky enough to enjoy peace for long. A new intrigue was created against him in Khorasan. The Khorasanis continuously sent letters of complaints to the Caliph's court. Yahya bin Khalid was not pleased with Ali bin Isa as the governor of Khorasan. Yahya's younger sons Musa and Mohammad

who commanded respect and influence in Khorasan had incited Wahab bin Abdullah and Hamza Khwarji to rebel. And it was due to their covert activities that Khorasan continued to reel under the impact of unrest and riots for years. During this period Haroon Rasheed's attention was drawn by Yahya and Jafar to the necessity of removing Ali bin Isa from the governorship of Khorasan. But he did not listen to them on this point. When peace was restored, paper horses started running. It was the result of instigation by the Barmuk family that the Khorasanis began to write letters of grievances against Ali bin Isa. When these letters became countless and the complaints started pouring in that he not only crossed all limits by torturing and persecuting civilians, he also was busy trying to topple the caliphate. Haroon Rasheed, under compulsion, left Baghdad and camped at Rayy. Hearing of the Caliph's arrival Ali bin Isa left Merv with gifts and reached Rayy and called on him and offered proof of his loyalty and sincerity. Being pleased, Haroon Rasheed retained him as the governor of Khorasan and included Rayy, Tabristan, Nahawand, Qomas and Hamdân under his jurisdiction.

### **Motamin as Crown Prince**

The same year, in 186 A.H. Caliph Haroon Rasheed made his third son Qasim as the third heir apparent. He took the oath from the people that Qasim would succeed Mamoon as caliph and on that occasion, he honored him with the title *Motamin*. While making Motamin the third successor following Mamoon, the condition included in the oath was that if Motamin proved himself capable, he would succeed Mamoon otherwise Mamoon would be entitled to remove him and make someone else the successor. He handed over the reins of Iraq, Syria and the Arab countries to the first crown prince. Mamoon was given the Eastern countries and Qasim was entrusted with Saghoor, Jazirah and the Province of Awasim. Ameen, the first crown prince, was made to write an agreement that read:

"I shall fulfil my commitments to Mamoon" Similarly he made Mamoon write one: I shall fulfill my commitments to Ameen." These arrangements were duly signed by men of repute, the elders, leaders of the army, officials of the government and the

elders of Madinah and Makkah and it was hung on Ka'bah. They were made to swear to remain content with what they were given and avoid usurping the other brother's territories. This was an order only concerning the matter of succeeding to the caliphate.

First Ameen would be the caliph of the Muslims and Mamoon would obey him. But Ameen would not have any authority to remove him from the governorship of those territories, which were chosen by Haroon. Mamoon would become caliph after Ameen and so on.

There were clarifications of these agreements, which were duly signed by Ameen, Mamoon and the others, which were also hung up on Ka'bah. Thus by dividing his sultanate among his sons Haroon Rasheed wanted to rule out the possibility of any quarrel among them in future. But this was not a wise step on his part and it probably was his paternal affection that compelled him to do such a thing, which was fated to end in failure.

### **A Remarkable Hajj of Haroon Rasheed**

Caliph Haroon Rasheed was very fond of performing Hajj. He never missed any except under the most compelling circumstances. It was his regular practice to go for Hajj and Jihad every alternate year.

No caliph ever performed Hajj as many times as he did but the Hajj he performed in 186 A.H. is specifically remarkable because it was during this pilgrimage that the particular agreement mentioned above was hung on the Ka'bah, and it was after this Hajj that he destroyed the power of Barmuk family.

Haroon left Ambâr for Makkah with the intention to perform Hajj. He was accompanied by his three sons Ameen, Mamoon and Motamin. Jafar bin Yahya, the Prime Minister, was also with him. Finishing the Hajj, he left Makkah for Madinah. He enriched the people of both the places with gifts and rewards. He distributed 10,500,000 dinar (gold coins) as charity on behalf of himself and his sons. He returned from Madinah and camped at Ambâr. At this place, he had Jafar bin Yahya Barmuk killed at the end of Muharram 187 A.H.

## **The Barmuk Family and Their Downfall**

While recording the conditions of Caliph Haroon Rasheed's caliphate, we have reached 187 A.H. In the beginning of this year, Haroon Rasheed had his minister killed and his brother Fadal and father Yahya imprisoned. In the lives of kings and caliphs killing a minister and imprisoning their family is not an extraordinary or unusual event. The histories of kings are replete with such incidents. The feats of kings are written in blood. The ordinary events of the downfall of the Barmuk family and Jafar's murder have assumed ugly proportions due to the machinations of the lovers of tumult, tellers of false tales, novelists and the ignorant worshippers of fantasies. Because there are many educated yet misinformed persons and many fools giving the impression of being wise who have misunderstood Mahmood Ghaznavi and Aurangzeb Alamgir and lead others to follow them and in the process damage the cause of Islam, it is necessary to expose the falsehoods about Mahmood and Alamgir and present the facts. Similarly false propaganda against the murder of Jafar and the downfall of the Barmuk family should be narrated in detail in order to separate reality from fantasy. Therefore, a detailed narration of the events of 187 A.H. is in order. First of all a short history of the Barmuk family will be followed by those false and unfounded narratives which have found publicity among the ignorant and misinformed, which have been quoted by and alluded to by many educated people and then finally the real facts will be given.

## **The Barmuk Family**

The oldest religion of the Iranians was Mah-ābādī, which entailed worship of the stars more than fire-worship. A number of reformers as revivers came one after another after Mah-ābād. The last of them was Zoroaster. The religious legal system, which he brought into practice, Allāh alone knows. But from what is gathered, it shows that his religion contained five-worship more than worship of stars. In his lifetime, his religion became the royal religion and spread to most parts of Iran. Asfandiyar's wrestling spread it to Afghanistan and the Punjab. The greatest of the Indian scholars Sangrachah Biyas visited



Zoroaster in Balkh, took an oath of obedience, returned to India and started propagating fire-worship, which survives among the Hindus in the form of *hawan* even today. Zoroaster's and his true devotee and the renouncer of his kingdom, King Lahrasab's, final resting place was Balkh. Balkh is as important in relation to Zoroastrianism as Jerusalem is in relation to Christianity or Buddhism is to Gaya (in India). Alexander of Greece destroyed Astkhar, Samarkand, Kangrah, Karachi and Kabul by assault and plunder. This area was part of the Zoroastrian kingdom of the Kyani family and it was this region where fire-worship was in practice. The influx of Greeks not only put an end to the Kyani kingdom but it also put out fire-worship. After some hundreds of years the Iranians were able to shake off the Greek yoke and Sāsān I unified the multiple kingships and anarchy of Iran, picked the sparks out of the Zoroastrian ashes and lighted its hearths. Balkh had been made desolate by the Chinese during Zoroaster's time but it was repopulated very soon and remained their holy city and their direction of prayer. Alexander's flood had diminished the markets of Balkh but it remained the place of hope of the steadfast Zoroastrians. It regained its youth again during the regime of the Sasanids. When the Sasanids breathed their last on the battlefields of Qadsiyah and Nahawand, the light of the hearths of Balkh increased all the more because the defeated emperor of Iran and the rest of the escaping leaders' place of assembly was in Balkh and it was to Balkh they turned and worshipped Yezdān in the hearth known as Naubahar. The spiritual leader of a hearth was called *Mugh* and the chief of the *Mughis*, the superintendent of all hearths of his province and the *Mugh* of this central hearth was known as *Barmugh*. *Mugh* the great spiritual leader of the Naubahar hearth at the sight of the ruin and helplessness of the greatest patron of fire-worship, the Iranian emperor, must have been moved and thought that the religion of which he was one of the leaders, was about to be humiliated and ruined and with it he and the honor of his family would vanish. The hearth of Naubahar was one of the four central hearths. This hearth commanded the greatest popularity and grandeur for Balkh was considered to be the place of Lahrasap's slaughter, Zoroaster's place of residence and the center of Zoroastrians. The Barmugh of Naubahar commanded the greatest respect among the fire-worshippers and the Iranians. In 31 A.H., the

flood of the Muslim victors moved on to Merv sweeping the plain and rolling off the mountains until they reached Balkh and the fire, which was said to have been burning for thousands of years became extinct. Neither the fire-worshippers survived nor the fireplace was needed any more. No group was there to honor Barmugh nor was there income for his luxuries. However, they maintained their title, Barmugh and the victorious Arabs pronounced it as Barmuk. It is incorrect to conclude that the Arabs put a stop to the fire worshippers prayer and converted them to Islam by force by demolishing Naubahar. Had the Muslims converted the fire worshippers to Islam by force, they would have first converted Barmuk. They did not disturb him rather the fire worshippers kept renouncing their religion and embracing Islam by themselves. It was due to this conversion that the Muslims scored victories wonderfully fast. Their arrival in Balkh meant the arrival of Islam there and consequently, it led to the ruin of the hearth of Naubahar and its Barmugh. Because Barmuk was the religious leader, he did not accept Islam for the advent of Islam in the country had damaged him in all respects. He looked on the Muslims in anger. The Mongols and Turkish tribes along the Chinese border, who had nothing to do with the Iranian nation and their religion but were terrified of attacking Balkh, now began to raid. Consequently, the same Mongol chiefs who promised to pay Jizyah to the Muslims began to rule over Balkh and later on proved inconvenient to the Muslims when they gained power. The Mongols removed all traces of fire worship from Balkh and brought the Barmuk family to the level of the lowest section of the society by dishonoring it. The Arabs did not stay there long and internal quarrels did not let them turn their attention to the borders much and thus Balkh remained the target of attacks by the Mongols. The Barmuk who had seen the good and prosperous days of Naubahar hearth and the Zoroastrian kingdom, died. His son, who was a follower of Zoroaster, came to be known by the same name. Barmuk II had not seen the golden days of Naubahar. In 86 A.H. when Qutaiba bin Muslim, the governor of Khorasan, invaded Balkh, a few women were brought into captivity and became slaves. Barmuk II's wife was among those who came into the share of Qutaiba bin Muslim's brother Abdullah bin Muslim. After a short time there was reconciliation with the people of Balkh, all the women

and captives were returned. So, Abdullah bin Muslim had also to return the women. At the time of her departure she said to him, "I have been made pregnant by you." When she reached Barmuk, she gave birth to a child who was Ja'far Barmuk's grandfather named Khalid. This narration may also be lumped with the same fictitious and imaginary stories which are generally written by wonder loving and wonder worshipping authors. However, Khalid was born at the residence of Barmuk II either in 86 or 87 A.H. In 124 A.H., Imam Ibrahim Abbasi sent Abu Muslim Khorasani as the officer and superintendent of his propagation. Abu Muslim enrolled Khalid bin Barmuk in his group when he was forty. Abu Muslim loved him very much and paid special attention to his training and raising his status. When Abu Muslim sent a man from Khorasan and had Abu Salmah Khalal alias minister to the family of Mohammad murdered, he wrote to Saffah to make Khalid Barmuk his minister. Khalid Barmuk remained in that capacity until Saffah's death. After Saffah when Mansoor Abbasi succeeded to the throne, he retained him as his minister. In the first year of his caliphate, Mansoor had Abu Muslim who was Khalid's patron, killed. Khalid did not show his resentment or sorrow at his death. But Mansoor taking precautionary measures sent him out on the plea of stamping out a rebellion and appointed Abu Ayub as his minister. Since Khalid did not show his stubbornness and disloyalty in any respect, Caliph Mansoor did not neglect to utilize the services of such an efficient and capable man. Khalid's future actions and attitude satisfied Mansoor. Khalid had the experience of being a true disciple of a conspiring and courageous man like Abu Muslim and was well versed in political matters. He harbored dedication and love for Iran in his heart, he had seen with his own eyes the end of Abu Muslim and while his heart was shedding tears of blood, he assumed the posture of a man deeper than Abu Muslim and succeeded in concealing his real intentions from an alert and discerning man like Caliph Mansoor. He remained the ruler of the state of Mojsil and the tutor to Mansoor's son. He maintained his status until the end of his life. To be the tutor of Caliph Mahdi proved highly beneficial to him and to his family. He had cleverly positioned himself to be the tutor of Mahdi. He survived Mahdi's accession to the throne and Mansoor's death. This added more to his

honor and status. He died during Mahdi's regime, in 163 A.H., at the age of 77. The second half of his life was spent in watching the birth and death of caliphates and he had himself worked as a dominant figure in ruining caliphates and founding new ones. At the time of his death, his son Yahya was 54 or 50 and he had also seen all these games and disturbances soon after he came of age. He had inherited from his father all thoughts, wishes, precautions and had heard with reverence and sadness the stories of the ruin of his ancestors, the honor of his family and the Iranian empire. He regarded himself as the representative and religious leader of his nation. He knew it fully that a slight error on his part might put an end to the respect and influence he commanded in the Islamic caliphate and bring him down to total destruction. On the other side, he and his father were fully conversant with the internal and family affairs of the caliph. The constant participation in the Caliph's court had kept his heart from being overawed and shattered by the awe of authority.

Khalid Barmuk's deepest plot was this that in 161 A.H. he advised Mahdi to make Yahya the tutor to Haroon Rasheed. As Mahdi himself had remained under his tutelage, he thought it only natural to give his son to Khalid's son to be coached and trained. Even before that when Haroon Rasheed was born of Khaizrân at Rayy, Khalid was with Mahdi there.

It was Khalid again who was instrumental in making Haroon Rasheed his foster grandson, Yahya's son Fadal, foster brothers by letting him suck Yahya's wife's milk and Fadal suck Khaizrân's milk. If all these wise steps of Khalid are studied deeply it becomes apparent that he was able to protect his family very intelligently and beautifully for he wanted to achieve a grand feat, that is, to avenge Abu Muslim's murder and bring the ruling power back to the Iranians.

Yahya bin Khalid had educated and trained Haroon. He had impressed Haroon so much that even after being caliph he used to address him as "Respected father" and was shy of talking informally in his presence. Caliph Hadi's caliphate was not in consonance with the plans of the Barmuk family and Yahya had limited influence on Hadi. Yahya thought out such a diabolical plan that Hadi's own mother Khaizrân turned against him. Their mother wishing to save

Haroon's life along with Yahya did away with Hadi by joining together and Hadi was only able to rule for a little more than a year. Yahya's bid for having Haroon accede to the throne was naturally a bid in his own interest. As expected soon after being caliph, Haroon made Yahya his Prime Minister and in charge of all the expeditions. Yahya was not a fool to keep Haroon's mother Khaizrân displeased. He began to do everything in consultation with her and always consulted her on every issue. After a short time, she died and Yahya no longer had to perform even that formality. He worked with so much concentration, sincerity and efficiency in the affairs of the caliphate and expeditions that his love and respect in Haroon's heart kept growing. He took great care and precaution not to make Haroon feel constrained in any way in the expression of his free mind and fulfillment of his heart's desire. It appeared that Yahya's only duty was to try his best to see Haroon's wish and intention fulfilled and that was all. The greatest strategic move he made was that he appointed and assigned quite imperceptibly his relatives, brothers, nephews and like-minded Iranians to responsible posts in the important states of the provinces and appointed many of them to be leaders of the army. He had managed to make his sons Fadal and Jafar brothers to Haroon Rasheed and Haroon called them his brothers and loved them very much. Haroon had put his sons under the guardianship and protection of Fadal and Jafar and when Yahya grew old in 174 A.H. he made his son Fadal his assistant in the ministry of expeditions.

When Yahya bin Abdullah rebelled in 176 A.H. at Delam, it was Fadal bin Yahya who settled it and had landed estates given to him. Haroon entrusted Yahya bin Abdullah to Jafar bin Yahya to keep him under his custody. Haroon had also made Fadal the governor of Khorasan, Tabristan, Rayy and Hamdân in 178 A.H. He had made Fadal the tutor to his son Ameen. During his governorship of Khorasan Yahya prepared a strong and well-armed Iranian army of 500,000 men. After a year, Haroon recalled him from there and appointed him Prime Minister. Yahya was always consulted in all important matters, that is, he continued to partake in all expeditions of the government.

Yahya's second son Jafar had been Haroon Rasheed's chief companion

and a very close friend. He always accompanied him at home and on journeys. He was very sweet-tempered and methodical. In 176 A.H., he was entrusted with the governorship of Egypt in addition to his being the inspector of Police of the royal palaces. Jafar sent Imran bin Mehrân to govern Egypt on his behalf and he lived in the service of Haroon. When rebellions broke out in Damascus and Syria, it was Jafar who went and put them down. Then Haroon made him the governor of Khorasan. Hardly a month had passed when he was made governor and city Magistrate of Baghdad itself.

Jafar entrusted this task to Harsimah bin Ayun and he himself continued to be Haroon's companion. Haroon Rasheed sent for Yahya bin Khalid and said to him, "Please tell Fadal to hand over the portfolios of the prime minister to Jafar because I feel shy to tell Fadal to hand over the job of prime minister to Jafar." So, Yahya, their father, conveyed Haroon's intention to Fadal and thus Jafar became Prime Minister. This shows how much hold this family had on Haroon.

During the period of his ministry Jafar bin Yahya dominated over all the posts and departments of the government so much that he came to be regarded as the real owner and ruler of the government. All the police and palaces of Baghdad were under him. It was he who had brought and appointed the administrators of the states, governors of the provinces and the commanders of the armies. He was the master and superintendent of the treasury to such an extent that when Haroon required money he used to ask Jafar for it. Yahya bin Khalid had other sons too who were officers in the army. He and his sons took great advantage of their authority and influence seamlessly and intelligently. That is, they spent government money lavishly and generously on gifts and rewards besides giving big revenues from estates and setting salaries. Consequently, his generosity made him as popular as Hatim. (This is in reference to Hatim Tai who is considered the proverbial example of generosity in Arabic culture. Editor) There was no one who was not an admirer and supporter of the Barmuk family. They earned large amounts of money and spent the same lavishly in purchasing their reputation and fame until not only in Khorasan and Iraq but also in Syria, Egypt, Arabia, Yemen and far-off countries the people eulogized their generosity and gifts in their odes.

The honor, popularity and power of the Barmuk dynasty had touched the zenith. Except for the fact that they had no accession to the throne of caliphate, they had all the rest at their disposal. But in spite of all this, they could not do anything against the intention of Haroon Rasheed. Haroon Rasheed and his supporters had no chance to question their power and grandeur. However, if hidden under this handling of power was an evil design or rebellion, then there would be no enemy greater and more formidable for them than Haroon Rasheed.

In the beginning of 187 A.H., it was suddenly witnessed that Haroon Rasheed meted out to the dynasty of Barmuk the treatment which is generally meted out to enemies. So we must observe and try to find out whether the Barmuk family had really starting hatching a conspiracy against his caliphate or not and whether Haroon Rasheed came to know about it or not. If the Barmuk family had really an evil intention against Haroon Rasheed and the Abbasid caliphate then however he treated them in the end was absolutely right and lawful. But if the Barmuk family was the same both internally and externally and they were sincerely loyal to him, then none can be a worse judge and tyrant than Haroon. For those who are accustomed to probe superficially, the ruin of the Barmuks may be insoluble and they have covered this knotty problem with the babblings of the inebriated and propped it up to look like a reality.

### **The Advent of Nadir Khan in India**

When Nadir Shah Irani landed on Indian soil and the Indian king brought him to Delhi as a dear guest with peace and friendship, someone in an intoxicated state at a bar said, "Ha! What a magnificent work Mohammad Shah has done by bringing Qazalbash into the fort and having him killed by female guards!" This mindless group with these words let the heads of the Iranians in Delhi get chopped off. At last being compelled Nadir Shah ordered a general massacre in Delhi and it was of such a magnitude that Delhi had not seen the like of it until date. So, it is in the same vein that someone has narrated the cause of Jafar Barmuk's death and said:

"Haroon Rasheed Abbasi had a sister named Abbasah bint Mahdi. He loved her very much. Similarly Jafar bin Yahya, the



Prime Minister was also his companion and friend who always lived with him. Haroon used to drink with Jafar and Abbasah. Just as he wanted his sister to participate in drinking, similarly he wished his Prime Minister Jafar to keep company with him. So, he had Abbasah married to Jafar so that their meeting and seeing each other without a veil might be lawful. But Jafar and Abbasah were sternly warned that they should not establish physical relations with each other. But they failed to abide by it. When Haroon came to know of it he had him murdered and thus ruined his entire family."

When the novelists and educated ignorant of our times laid their hands on such nonsense, they polished it and propagated this falsehood so much that he who reads these books reposes more faith in it than Quranic verses and Hadith and does not like to hear anything to the contrary.

This canard was authored hundred of years after Jafar's death and Tabri has mentioned it in his book. As the incident contains novelty and was uniquely narrated, wonder loving minds were inclined to it and no one has missed recording this rumor since and we too unfortunately have to refer to this unpleasant story. Tabri and other historians have given other causes as well. But few of them have tried to use wisdom and common sense by discriminating and selecting genuine incidents.

1) Haroon Rasheed is the fifth caliph among the Abbasids. The Abbasids prided themselves on being superior to all Arabs in respect of family honor and race. The entire Arab world recognized their ancestral superiority. It was their family honor that propelled them to rise against Banu Umayyah and they met with success. When they came into power as ruler and caliph of the entire Islamic world, their pride of race increased even more. Arab prejudice and the sense of respect were deeply ingrained in them. In this case, how was it possible for a caliph like Haroon Rasheed to have his sister married to a man that he regarded as a Zoroastrian slave's son and grandson of a man of an unknown father? Admitted, he addressed Jafar as his brother and his father as "respected father" because he was his tutor. But at the time of marrying his sister, he could not overlook nation,



family and race. If he had turned liberal minded in respect of marriage like the modern people, his relatives who had a single lineage and were in good numbers, could not remain mute spectators at this familial dishonor. Similarly, Abbasah too could not have tolerated such humiliation.

2) It is beyond comprehension that a religious minded man like Haroon Rasheed who went on Hajj and Jihad every alternate year and who was the chief and caliph of the Islamic world could have held drinking parties. If a caliph in Banu Umayyah had taken date juice wine, it created a stir in the whole world and historians have continued to mention this evil act in particular until the present. However, Haroon Rasheed who visited the meetings of the scholars and Allāh-fearing devotees while alone and sat on tattered mats and wept bitterly while listening to their sermons, how could he have anything to do with wine an impure and dirty thing like urine? Elders like Fudail bin Ayād, Ibn Sammāk and Sufyan Thauri were his friends and companions. A man who performs his Salat five times a day with great regularity, with humility and piety especially the pre-dawn prayer which is performed an hour and a half before sunrise, coupled with hundreds of supererogatory prayers daily, how shameless and injustice it is to call such a man drinker of wine. How can a man who attended a wine party in the night participate in the pre-dawn prayer? How can humility and piety be found in the prayer of a man who is in the habit of taking wine?

3) The scholars in Iraq had given a fatwa about the legality of nabeedh, a mixture of dates and water, and some wealthy people used it but it cannot be connected with the intoxication found in wine. It has never been proved that Haroon Rasheed ever used date-juice or held such a party as mentioned in these false narratives. Until Haroon Rasheed's regime the simplicity and military life of the Arabs persisted which did not include taking wine. The Arab nobility claimed by Haroon Rasheed always condemned wine as an evil so much so that the nobles in the days of ignorance (the period before Islam) never touched it nor did they consider it a proper act of the nobility. That was why the Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr ؓ and many others of the nobility of the Arabs never touched it even during the days

before Islam. Haroon Rasheed could not accept this lowness and depravity in violation of the Islamic instruction.

4) Even in the present irreligious condition nobody, however mean and low and addicted to taking wine in public he might be, would like his sister to drink with him. The drinkurd people even they would not like to start a drinking session with other men taking their sisters with them. How could Haroon Rasheed Abbasi who had *Tabiyyen*, (those who were with the companions of the Prophet ﷺ) and *Taba-Tabiyeen*, (those who were with the *Tabiyyen*,) at his court have committed such a shameless act without dying of shame?

5) Those who are addicted to adultery, theft and drinking, generally try to prevent their relatives from doing such things. If Haroon Rasheed had been habituated to it, he could not have persuaded his sister to follow suit. Probably his beloved wife Zubaidah, whom he loved very much, would have been the first to partake it with him. But none has indicated anything of this kind about her and her life is impeccable on this matter. How surprising is it that there were regular and constant recitations of the Qur'an at her palace while her dear husband was drowned in wine?

6) The historians have written with confidence that there was a Jewish doctor named Jibrail at Haroon Rasheed's court. He partook a meal with the caliph and when he saw harmful things, he stopped him from eating it. Once fish was served to the caliph and he wanted to eat it but the doctor requested him not to and asked the cook to take it away. By chance, one of the caliph's servants found Jibrail eating the same fish at his residence. Then it was suggested that the doctor himself wanted to eat it and so prevented the caliph from consuming it. The servant communicated this to Haroon. It was a small incident and Haroon Rasheed could have said nothing to him except laugh it off. When the doctor came to know that the caliph was informed of the incident, he put three pieces of the fish into three separate bowls. He put meat and other things eaten by the caliph into a bowl and mixed them. He put ice water in the second bowl. He then poured wine in the third bowl. Then he presented the three bowls before the caliph and said, "The first two bowls contain what you have eaten and the third contains what I have eaten." When he looked into them, he

found that the contents had rotted and were giving off a bad smell. However, the bowl that contained the wine and fish had not rotted. The doctor saved himself from being put to shame and explained to the caliph, "As I take wine, the fish was not harmful to me. And as you do not take wine, I stopped you from eating it." This episode bears proof that Haroon Rasheed abstained from wine.

7) Actually, Abbasah was married to Mohammad bin Sulaiman. When he died and she became a widow, she was then married to Ibrahim bin Saleh bin Ali who was Haroon Rasheed's close relative and descendent from Abbas. To attribute such a falsehood to such a noble and pious lady is a proof of the lowness of the liar. He who tries to prove falsehood to be a fact is certainly a man of devilish nature. The strangest point in this allegation is that Haroon took care of following the Islamic law in finding a legal way to allow Jafar and Abbasah to look at each other but he forgot the Islamic law concerning drinking.

### **The Reality Behind the Extermination of the Barmuks**

Power and kingdoms are objects that create enmity between two brothers and between father and son. The histories of governments and kingdoms bear witness to this. The Abbasids killed without any hesitation anyone whom they thought to be harmful to their authority. When Caliph Mansoor saw that Abu Muslim wanted to capture power, he put him to death at once. Sometimes the companions and officials of kings and rulers take advantage of this habit and nature and they attempt to prove a man, who they want to be harmed by the king, to be a rebel. The officer of Mansoor's bodyguards was Rabi bin Yunus who descended from Uthman bin Affan's servant Kaisan. He was the greatest confidant of Mansoor and he also was his advisor. He wielded much power and authority during Mansoor's regime. It was Rabi who is said to have advised him to kill Abu Muslim. Mansoor made Abu Ayub his minister in place of Khalid Barmuk but in 153 A.H., he appointed Rabi bin Yunus instead. At Mansoor's death, it was he who managed the oath of Mahdi's caliphate. During Mahdi's caliphate, he retained his post as minister but since he was known as the *Hajib* (literally the covering or in the political sense one who speaks for the caliph without actually involving him), Mahdi made

Abu Abdullah Muawiya bin Yasar his minister also and assigned to him most of the departments of the government. After some time, Rabi had Abu Abdullah censured, deposed and jailed. Then Mahdi appointed Yaqub bin Dawood. He was also censured and removed after some time. Then he selected for the job Faiz bin Abi Saleh who came from a Christian family in Nishapur. In short, Rabi bin Yunus did not let any minister succeed and he remained the only important minister. When Hadi's caliphate was established after Mahdi's, Rabi's authority reached its pinnacle because Hadi had invested him with all powers. It was at his insistence that Khaizran was distanced from dabbling in state affairs. Hadi and Rabi died almost at the same time. Rabi's son Fadal bin Rabi expected to be appointed to a high post but soon after coming into power Haroon handed over the entire administration of the caliphate to Yahya bin Khalid. Yahya bin Khalid belonged to Abu Muslim's group as has been mentioned above. He hated Rabi bin Yunus because it was he who was instrumental in having Abu Muslim murdered and doubt cast upon Yahya's father Khalid bin Barmuk and had him deposed as minister and had his own friend Abu Ayub appointed. Yahya bin Khalid did not let Fadal bin Rabi get a post and by retaining the post of Hajib for himself, he snatched away all his powers and reduced him to being totally ineffectual. It is clear that there existed old and strong enmity between the Barmuk family and Fadal bin Rabi. With the rise of the Barmuk's power, Fadal bin Rabi's enmity and hatred also increased. However, since Haroon fully relied upon the Barmuks, Fadal could not harm them. In such a situation, there was only one alternative for Fadal and that was to find real proof of the Barmuks' disloyalty, betrayal and rebellion and then guide the Caliph against them and thus serve his purpose. Since Barmuk was very experienced, clever and alert, Fadal bin Rabi could not find any opportunity to have him accused but he continued to study all his activities minutely. The Barmuks had collected so many supporters by virtue of their generosity and endowments of wealth that Fadal bin Rabi found it difficult to find a confidant. Haroon wanted to give him a post in view of his old and ancestral connections but since his mother Khaizran was angry with Fadal and his father Rabi for trying to limit her influence in the time of Hadi, she insisted that her son stop trying to assist Fadal bin Rabi and

Yahya supported her on this point. When she died in 174 A.H. Haroon recruited him as the head clerk of his accounts office and then Fadal bin Rabi had a bit more influence than before.

When Yahya bin Abdullah came from Delan with Fadal bin Jafar, Haroon Rasheed wanted to imprison him despite the treaty he had written. First, he sought a fatwa (religious decision) from some scholars. Hearing this the Barmuks recommended Yahya bin Abdullah to the Caliph because the latter shared Abu Muslim Khorasani's faith and supported the partisans of the Prophet's family internally. Haroon Rasheed put Yahya bin Abdullah under Jafar bin Yahya's charge and asked him to keep him under his custody. Jafar kept him with respect and comfort.

When Haroon Rasheed sent Ali bin Isa as the governor of Khorasan in 180 A.H., Yahya bin Khalid as stated earlier, opposed that appointment. That was perhaps Haroon Rasheed's first act that he did in defiance of Yahya bin Khalid's intentions and wishes. As Yahya, his sons and relatives had been dominating all the countries, the Barmuks did not give Ali bin Isa any rest. Yahya's son Musa bin Yahya pooled up all his resources and started inciting rebellions and breaches of the law one after another. Ali bin Isa came upon it by chance as to who engineered all the disturbances in Khorasan. He dispatched a letter to Haroon briefing him on the situation and complaining against Musa bin Yahya. This complaint and the contrary complaint of Yahya's created a doubt in Haroon Rasheed's mind. As a result when news after news regarding Ali bin Isa's preparation for revolt started pouring into the caliph's court, Haroon Rasheed did not send any Amir or commander to him. Rather he himself marched to Khorasan with his army. He encamped at Rayy in 186 A.H. He had a slight doubt and he never doubted the Barmuks. He did know that the Barmuks disliked Ali bin Isa living in Khorasan. When Ali bin Isa sent letters against Musa bin Yahya and Yahya bin Khalid's other sons and relatives that they created mischief in Khorasan, Haroon Rasheed's attention was seriously drawn towards the problem of Khorasan. He did not disclose to the Barmuks nor could they know by themselves how curiously and minutely the Caliph was watching them. They had the letters of complaints against Ali sent to Haroon Rasheed. Had they

realized that Haroon Rasheed was casting doubtful eyes towards them, they would never have sent them and would never have accused Ali bin Isa of revolt. When Haroon Rasheed arrived at Rayy, Ali bin Isa paid a respectful visit to him and told him in detail about the situations in Khorasan. He informed him that the whole of Khorasan and all its provinces were in the grip of the Barmuks and they were completely ready to avenge Abu Muslim Khorasani's death. Understanding this one can well imagine how seriously Haroon Rasheed was affected by this shocking news. Knowing how dependant he was on the Barmuks and realizing the implications of their activities in Khorasan was a nightmarish scenario for him to contemplate. He encouraged Ali bin Isa and sent him to Rayy and he returned with his emotions fully suppressed and buried in his heart. After Ali bin Isa had left, Fadal bin Rabi, who finally had concrete evidence against Jafar Barmuk, communicated the shocking news to Haroon Rasheed that Jafar Barmuk had released Yahya bin Abdullah who had gone somewhere to prepare to lead a revolt. When meeting Jafar and in the course of their talk, Haroon Rasheed asked Jafar about Yahya bin Abdullah. Jafar told him that he was still under house arrest. Haroon Rasheed asked him whether he could say that under oath. This made Jafar extremely nervous and he realized that the secret was out. He steadied and said, "Yahya bin Abdullah has been living under my care for a long time and I did not apprehend any danger from him. So I did not see any harm in releasing him." This was the most critical point for Haroon Rasheed. If he had shown his displeasure at that moment, the Barmuks would have never come under his control and would then have made use of all those resources, which they had made available both materially and morally. Confrontation with the Barmuks was no easy job for Haroon Rasheed and probably they would not have given him breathing time and would not have let him make a sign indicative of distress, because 25 persons among Yahya bin Khalid's sons and grandsons were men of letters and sword who remained present at his palace in different posts on the grounds. They had under their possession the keys to the administration and provisions for all territories. All the military commanders were appointed by them and they were all loyal to them. All the administrative officers and high officials were their appointees.

The Scholars, Legal Experts and spiritual leaders were not out of their control because they served them much and obliged them. All the poets were their admirers. They were popular with their subjects by virtue of their generosity and so from the west to the east they had become liked by the people at large. They had made such large scale and fool proof preparations that several Haroon Rasheeds would not have succeeded. But Haroon Rasheed steadied himself and after hearing about Yahya bin Abdullah's release from Jafar said carelessly, "I simply asked you about him by the way. That you have let him go is very good. I was myself about to ask you to release him right now."

It is easy to imagine that the release of a person like Yahya bin Abdullah was in reality a shock to Haroon Rasheed. The Alawiites' revolt did not give the Abbasids any rest throughout their reign and Yahya bin Abdullah was not an ordinary man whose freedom from captivity could be insignificant to Haroon Rasheed. Anyway, Haroon Rasheed succeeded on this occasion and concealed his feelings. At that same time, another incident took place. On the occasion of some feast, the officials of the government and Iranian chiefs were present. Somebody said, "How intelligently Abu Muslim transferred the rule from one dynasty to another." Jafar said, "It was not a praiseworthy piece of work because he did it by killing 600,000 people. It would have been more admirable if it was done quietly." There was someone at the party who heard and narrated the incident to Haroon Rasheed who was sure that Jafar was the man who wanted to do it himself. Then in order to put the Barmuks off their guard he started drafting the documents for distributing the powers of succession and territory among his sons. This was the kind of work that was not expected to be taken up by a caliph who was aware of a serious conspiracy against him. This was the greatest allusion and trap that Haroon Rasheed led the Barmuks into. He could neither spend much time in the affairs nor could he put the Barmuks off their guard for long. So, in 186 A.H. he came back to Rayy, took *bay'at* for Motamin's succession, prepared the deed of distribution and had the treaty written and duly signed by Ameen and Mamoon. Then he went for Hajj, gave alms to the needy, came to Madinah, gave away rewards and alms and returned. He then arrived at Ambar and suddenly on the last night of Muharram, he killed Jafar, put his father and brother into captivity and did not



give anyone a chance to move against him.

Haroon Rasheed reached Ambār and one night he sent for his Hajib Masroor and said to him, "Take a reliable body of Sarhangis and go to Jafar's tent, call him to the door and cut off his head and come back." Masroor was horrified to hear it. But Haroon Rasheed said to him silently, "This order of mine must be complied with without any delay." Masroor left at once, went to Jafar's tent and came back with his head. That same night Caliph Haroon Rasheed put Jafar's father and brothers into jail and at once issued an order that Jafar's, Fadal's and Yahya's property wherever it was must be confiscated. Then all the members of the Barmuk dynasty were arrested and sent to jail, and all their appointees were removed from all responsible posts in the government. Thus, Haroon Rasheed in a single night succeeded in warding off the danger of the Barmuks and heaved a sigh of relief. He achieved this feat in such a manner that no one had time to create any opposition. He very much relied on Yahya bin Khalid's brother Mohammad bin Khalid Barmuk's loyalty and it is possible that he might have revealed some secrets to Haroon Rasheed. He was not arrested. On the other hand a respectable member of Haroon Rasheed's family Abdul Malik bin Saleh bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas who was his grandfather, entered into the conspiracy with the Barmuks because he was promised to be made caliph. After taking the Barmuks captive, Haroon Rasheed held Abdul Malik bin Saleh captive. Abdul Malik bin Saleh's son Abdur Rahman stood witness against his father and Abdul Malik remained in captivity. Mamoon set him free during his regime. Ibrahim bin Uthman bin Naheek was also an accomplice in the conspiracy and was put to death. Yahya Barmuk and Fadal Barmuk died in captivity in 190 A.H. and 193 A.H. respectively.

As the Barmukis gave money to the people thoughtlessly and patronized the poets, the people in general who were unaware of the reality, felt shocked and they declared Haroon Rasheed a tyrant. The poets wrote elegies, the storytellers narrated their generosity and qualities with exaggeration. Haroon Rasheed did not make information of the conspiracy public and issued strict orders against any discussion about the Barmuks. During his regime, the public in general never found out the real cause of the removal of the Barmuks.



Had the public come to know about the betrayal and conspiracy of the Barmuks, Haroon Rasheed and the government of the Abbasids would have lost their hold and it would have given rise to new conspiracies. It was his foresightedness that he did not make any public statement about them and by so doing kept the people terror stricken, overawed and puzzled and this was most suited to keeping the rule of the Abbasids intact. If the common people were allowed to air their views about the fall of the Barmuks, their supporters and admirers who were present everywhere in great numbers might have opened their mouths and the wind of opposition might have started blowing against the Abbasids. In this particular case, no other strategy was more suitable than the one he adopted.

The Barmuks claimed to be the lovers of the Prophet's family and supporters of the descendents of Abi Talib. The Alwites took their ruin as a personal loss and even today, the partisans of Ali and partisans of Husain are found mourning over their death and destruction. Their love for knowledge and patronage of the scholars is narrated exaggeratedly and colorfully although that Zoroastrian family did not do any extraordinary or significant service to Islam and the Muslims. The cause of their death and destruction is quite evident and there is no room for doubt, in order to save his sultanate Haroon Rasheed killed the Barmuks as a king who destroys his enemies to safeguard his kingdom. He held also grand father a captive with Barmees. There is no need to mix speculative and nonsensical theories with a matter that is clear.

### **Other Events of Haroon's Regime**

We have reached 187 A.H. in recording conditions and important events of Haroon Rasheed's regime. After the incident of the Barmuk family, Haroon Rasheed sent his son Motamin to the province of Awasim, Motamin invaded Rome and sent Abbâs bin Jafar bin Ash'ath to lay siege to the fort of Sanân. The Romans failed to put up any resistance and by returning 320 Muslim prisoners made a settlement with the Muslims. During the same period, the Romans deposed their queen and made a commander Nagfoor their king. Mention has already been made that the Romans, out of fear of the

French king Charlemagne after his capture of Italy made peace with Haroon Rasheed. The first thing Nagfoor did after assuming power was to make an agreement with the French King and after settling the matter of jurisdiction with him wrote a letter to Haroon Rasheed:

The Queen, because of her natural weakness and too much pressure, came to terms with you and continued to pay you the Jizya. This was from her foolishness. Now you must repay all the taxes you have collected from us and promise to give payment as a fine or we will punish you with our swords.

When this letter was received and read by Haroon Rasheed, he flew into such a rage that the officials and ministers around him had no courage to remain sitting there and left the court silently. Haroon wrote on the back of the same letter:

In the name of Allāh who is most Beneficent and Merciful. From Amir al-Muminin Haroon Rasheed to the Roman dog. You, the son of unbelief, I read your letter. You will see its reply with your own eyes. You need not read it. That is all.

He wrote the above reply and sent back the letter. The same day he left Baghdad with the army for the Roman territories, arriving there he besieged its capital Herculah. Nagfoor was at a loss and finding himself powerless to resist, begged him to be excused and promised to pay him the Jizya. Having defeated and humiliated him Haroon returned after exacting a promise from him to pay more Jizya than before. He had hardly reached the city of Riqqah when Nagfoor violated the peace treaty and prepared to rebel. He was sure that due to winter the Muslim soldiers would not dare to launch an attack on them. However, as soon as Haroon heard this news he left Riqqah, entered Roman territory and conquered and destroyed many forts. He continued to capture Roman territory until he confronted Nagfoor, who pleaded for forgiveness again. Haroon collected the full amount of tax and brought most parts of the territory under his control.

The same year, 187 A.H. Ibrahim bin Adham died. (Ibrahim Adham was a prince from Balkh who gave up his worldly power and wealth to become an ascetic.)

In 188 A.H., the Roman King Nagfoor gave indications that he was going to rebel again. Ibrahim bin Jibrail from Safsáf invaded Rome. The Roman Emperor himself came out to fight. However, he could not stand the pressure, was decisively defeated and left 40,000 Roman soldiers dead while he escaped. The Islamic army returned victorious.

In 189 A.H., caliph Haroon Rasheed went to Rayy and made adjustments in the administration by deposing and appointing new administrators in the provinces west of Khorasan. He consoled and encouraged Marzaban Delam by sending him a certificate of pardon and safety. The elders and rulers of the border regions visited him and assured him of their loyalty. He made Abdul Malik bin Málík the ruler of Tabristan, Rayy, Qumas, and Hamadán. The same year another exchange of prisoners between the Romans and the Muslims took place. The same year Imám Muhammad bin Hasan Shúbani, Abu Harúfa's disciple, died at Al-Zambuwaih near Rayy and the same day Kisai Nahvi also died. Both had been in the company of Haroon Rasheed. He joined the burial service and when he returned from the graveyard, he said, "We have buried both Fiqah and Nahw today."

In 190 A.H., Haroon Rasheed made his son Mamoon his deputy at Riqqah, handed over to him all the affairs of the government and invaded Rome with 135,000 soldiers following Nagfoor's violation of the peace treaty. He surrounded the fort and after thirty days, he conquered it and captured and killed the Romans. Then he sent Dawood bin Isa bin Musa with 70,000 soldiers to capture other Roman forts. This army shook up the entire Roman Empire. During the same period Sharjeel bin Maan bin Zaidah captured Saqaliah, Dalbashah and other forts. Yazid bin Mukhlid and Abdulláh bin Málík conquered the forts of Qauniyah and Mukhallad respectively. Humaid bin Mayuf, the Admiral, repaired the Syrian and Egyptian fleet and invaded Cyprus, defeated the inhabitants and took the entire island as spoils of war and brought 17,000 men as captives. Then Haroon encircled Tawwanah. In short, the Muslims made up their mind to create an upheaval in the Roman Empire, put an end to and settle the frequent battles once and for all. Nagfoor felt helpless he accepted to pay the taxes and sent a sum of 50,000 Asharfis to Haroon on behalf of himself and on behalf of his son and the bishops. He sent

an appeal to Haroon requesting him to return a certain woman from among the captives of Herculah for she was betrothed to his son. The caliph granted his request and sent back the said woman. Taking pity upon Nagfoor for his entreaties and humility, he returned his country to him in exchange for 300,000 Asharfis and the normal taxes. Immediately after his return, the Romans revolted again. The same year 190 A.H. Khalid bin Yazid bin Hâtim was made Governor of Mousil and Harsimah bin Ayun was entrusted with the task of constructing the fort of Tartoos. 3,000 soldiers of Khorasan and 1,000 soldiers of Masisah and Antakya were busy constructing the fort of Tartoos. It was completed in 192 A.H. The same year Kharmiyah in Azerbaijan revolted. Abdullâh bin Mâlik with 10,000 soldiers was sent to punish him. He defeated the rebels and killed the captives and put an end to the mischief. The same year on 3 Muharram 190 A.H. Yahya Barmuk died in Riqqah in captivity. He was 71. His funeral service was led by his son Fadal bin Yahya.

In 191 A.H., Haroon Rasheed made Muhammad bin Fadal bin Sulaiman the governor of Mousil. The Governorship of Makkah was given to Fadal bin Abbâs.

## **Rebellion in Khorasan**

It has already been mentioned that when Ali bin Isa was appointed governor of Khorasan, the Baramuks incited Wahab bin Abdullâh and Hamza bin Atrak to revolt. Wahab was killed but Hamza survived and escaped and he continued to plunder in the area. Ali bin Isa, the Amir of Khorasan, deputed Yahya bin Ash'ath the Administrator of Samarkand and Mawaraunnahr. There was a famous chief in the army of Mawaraunnahr named Rafe bin Laith bin Nasr bin Sayyar who was linked with the organization of the Barmuk family. He hated Caliph Haroon and Ali bin Isa. Yahya bin Ash'ath married a certain woman and Rafe bin Laith became involved with her and she wanted to be divorced from Yahya but he would not divorce her. Rafe suggested a way out saying, "Announce that you have become an atheist and present two witnesses. Your marriage with him will automatically be terminated. Embrace Islam after that and then I shall marry you." She acted upon his advice and by this trickery married

Rafe. It was a technique to annul the marriage, this was probably the first time this legal trick was used. Yahya bin Ash'ath sent a detailed report about all these events to Haroon Rasheed. He wrote to Ali bin Isa the governor of Khorasan, to separate the woman from Rafe, and exercise the Islamic law concerning his case, mount him on a donkey and display him in Khorasan. So, in compliance he was separated from her and sent to jail in Samarkand. One day he escaped from the jail and went to Ali bin Isa, the governor, in Balkh. Ali bin Isa wanted to execute him but his son made a recommendation for him and Ali bin Isa ordered him to be sent to Yahya bin Ash'ath in Samarkand. Rafe arrived there and killed the administrator and occupied Samarkand.

At this news Ali bin Isa sent his son Isa bin Ali to Samarkand. Isa bin Ali was killed in the fighting. Then Ali bin Isa, taking his army, left Balkh and came to Merv before Rafe could capture it. This occurred in 191 A.H. Caliph Haroon Rasheed heard about Rafe's crimes, deposed Ali bin Isa from the governorship of Khorasan and deputed Harsimah bin Ayun in his place. The fact was that all the chiefs of the Khorasan army and the members of the Baramuk's group had joined Rafe. Harsimah bin Ayun arrived in Samarkand and besieged Rafe. Rafe's defense continued for a long time.

### **The Death of Haroon Rasheed**

After punishing the Romans, defeating and humiliating Nagfoor and collecting all taxes from him, Haroon Rasheed returned to Riqqah. Here he was apprised of the crimes of Rafe bin Laith and the disloyalty of some Khorasani leaders. He made up his mind to go to Khorasan. He made provisions for the army, left Riqqah in Shaban 192 A.H. and then marched on to Baghdad. While departing, Haroon made Motamin his deputy at Riqqah and Khuzaima bin Khazim his assistant. He then made his son Ameen his deputy in Baghdad and ordered Mamoom to stay with him there. Mamoom's scribe, Fadal bin Sahal, said to Mamoom, "It is not proper for you to remain with Ameen in Baghdad try to accompany the Caliph." Mamoom requested from his father to be allowed to accompany him and he granted it. Just as Haroon was about to leave Baghdad, Fadal bin

Yahya Barmuk died in captivity in Muharram 193 A.H. When he was busy fighting the Romans, he became sick and reached Riqqah in the same state of illness. When he came to Baghdad, he was still ill and it was in that condition that he left for Khorasan with the army. The Caliph left Baghdad and reached Jurjan in Safar 193 A.H. His illness took a turn for the worse there. He made an announcement before all the military commanders at Jurjan. "Whatever army and military equipment with me at the moment, it will remain attached to Khorasan and Mamoon. He is the commander and owner of all these armies and all the commanders will obey him." Relieved in this way from Mamoon's position Haroon Rasheed sent him to Merv in the company of leaders like Abdullâh bin Mâlik Yahya bin Ma'az, Asad bin Khuzaima, Abbas bin Jâfar bin Muhammad bin Ash'ath and Naim bin Hazim. After sending Mamoon to Merv, he went to Tus. He was then accompanied by Fadal bin Rabi, Ismail bin Sab'ih, Mansoor Hajib Husain and Jibrail bin Bakhtishu. At Tus his condition worsened and he was bed-ridden. We have read above about the fight between Harsimah bin Ayun and Rafe bin Laith. Bukhara was conquered and Rafe's brother Bashir bin Laith was arrested. Harsimah sent him to the Caliph's court. When Haroon was in his sickbed, Bashir was led into his presence. Haroon ordered his death and he was killed very mercilessly. After giving the execution order, Haroon became unconscious. When he regained his consciousness, he ordered a grave to be dug in a corner of the home where he was staying. When it was ready, a few Quran readers descended into it and recited the whole Quran. He had his cot shifted to the graveside and lying on it he continued to look at the grave. In that state, he died on the night of 3 Jamad Thani 193 A.H. corresponding to 24 March 808 AD. His funeral service was led by his son Saleh. He had been Caliph for 23 years and two and half months. His grave in Tus is well known.

Haroon Rasheed was married to Zubaidah bint Jâfar bin Mansoor. Her kunya was Umm Jâfar. Muhammad Ameen was born to her. Ali, Abdullâh, Mamoon, Qasim, Motamin, Muhammad Mu'tasim, Saleh, Muhammad Abu Musa, Muhammad Abu Yaqub, Abul Abbas, Abu Sulaiman, Abu Ali and Abu Ahmad all were born to his slave-girls. Among his sons, four are famous Ameen, Mamoon, Mu'tasim and Mohasin. Mohasin was not literate and so Haroon did not regard him

fit for succession. However, he became caliph and many of his descendents were Abbasid caliphs and Haroon Rasheed's line continued through him. Just as he left many sons at the time of his death, he left many daughters as well who were all born from his slave-girls.

Haroon Rasheed should be considered as the high point in the Abbasid dynasty. The Abbasid caliphate became powerful and touched its zenith during his administration. The descendents of Abi Talib and other conspiring groups felt discouraged in their efforts. He was a great lover of knowledge and cared very much for Islam. He completely uprooted the evil of atheists. The Christian Empire of Rome paid taxes to him. He left 900,000,000 dinars in the treasury at his death. He was the ruler of the entire Islamic world except Spain and Morocco. It was during his period of rule that the work of composition and compilation of the Islamic sciences was begun in earnest. The Jewish and Christian scholars were honored and patronized in the court of Baghdad. He endowed the Christians with military commands and kept them in his company as friends. During his Caliphate, the Indian scholars reached Baghdad directly or through the Governor of Sindh and they were all honored. Books in Hebrew were translated and the compilation of various sciences and arts were introduced. During his rule, the life of the people was comfortable and they enjoyed a high level of wealth and prosperity. Poetry and music also flourished in Baghdad in this period. Story tellers wrote fictitious and fanciful tales about Haroon, which became popular in the world and created a good deal of misunderstanding about him (this is a reference to 1001 Nights among other works). Haroon Rasheed was a brave and military-minded man. He spent months and years happily in the saddle of his horse. And when he was in the company of the ascetic, he appeared to be an ascetic, and when among the legal scholars, he was a legal scholar of the first order and similarly when sitting with scholars of the Prophet's traditions, he was an excellent scholar in this field as well. He was an enemy to the atheists, with the followers of other religions he dealt kindly and sympathetically. He was extremely fond of three things Hajj, Jihad and charity. He was very sensitive and softhearted. Whenever anybody sincerely lectured him and made him fear hell, he wept bitterly.

One day Ibn Sammāk was sitting with Haroon. Haroon felt thirsty and he asked for water and water was brought. When he wanted to drink, Ibn Sammāk said: "O Amir al-Muminin! Stop a moment." Haroon Rasheed said, "Yes?" Ibn Sammāk said, "If you can't get water when you are most thirsty, how much will you spend to get a bowl of water?" Haroon Rasheed said, "I shall exchange it for half of my realm." Ibn Sammāk said, "Now, you may drink." When he finished Ibn Sammāk said, "O Amir al-Muminin! If this water remains in your abdomen and does not come out, how much will you spend to take it out?" Haroon Rasheed said, "Half of my realm if need be." Ibn Sammāk said, "Enough. Now you must know that the price of your whole realm is equal to a bowl of water and a bowl of urine. You must not be proud of it." Haroon Rasheed burst into tears and continued to weep for a long time.

Once Haroon Rasheed requested a righteous and pious man to advise him. He said, "If your friend is such as makes you fear leading to good results he is better than the friend who makes you careless of and indifferent to fear leading to bad results." Haroon Rasheed requested him to explain what he said. He replied, "If anybody who tells you that on the day of judgment you will be questioned about your subjects and so you fear Allāh much it is better than he who tells you that you are from among the family of the Prophet (ﷺ) and that by virtue of your proximity to the Prophet (ﷺ), all your sins will be forgiven." Hearing it he wept so much that those sitting near by began to feel pity for him.

Qadi Fudail says, "Except two Kings there is none who has undertaken a journey for religious knowledge during his student days. One is Haroon Rasheed who along with his sons Ameen and Mamoon went on a journey to listen to the Mu'atta of Imam Malik and the manuscript that was read from is available with the Egyptian Kings. The second is Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi who traveled to Alexandria to give audience to the Muwatta of Imam Malik.

Haroon Rasheed was interested in polo and archery. He was 45 when he died. Doctor Jibrail bin Bakhtishu committed an error in treating him and that was why the Doctor was considered pro Ameen and his Hijab, spokesman, Masroor was considered a supporter of Mamoon.



While Haroon was on the journey, his condition continued to worsen and his son Ameen wrote some letters addressed to Haroon Rasheed's companions and sent them through Bakr bin Al-Motamir. Those letters were purported to have been written for the sake of the oath being taken for his caliphate, presuming Haroon Rasheed dead. One letter was addressed to his brother Saleh to come to him at once with all the army, equipment and the treasury after consulting Fadal bin Rabi. The same types of letters were addressed to other companions of Haroon Rasheed. A similar letter was written to Fadal bin Rabi. The letters assured all the chiefs they would be retained in their respective posts. Haroon came to know of the event and the arrival of Bakr bin Almotamir by chance. He sent for him and questioned him about the purpose of his visits. When he failed to give a satisfactory reply, he was imprisoned.

Haroon Rasheed died after this incident. Fadal bin Rabi had Bakr released from the jail and he distributed Ameen's letters. When the leaders went through them, they had consultations. As all were eager and anxious to go back to their native land Baghdad, Fadal bin Rabi was able to take all of them to Baghdad and the orders left by Haroon and their commitments to Mamoon were all forgotten.

### **Ameen Rasheed bin Haroon Rasheed**

Muhammad Ameen bin Haroon bin Mahdi bin Mansoor Abbasi was born to Zubaidah Khatoun. Ameen and Mamoon were the same age. Haroon had set Ameen to be Caliph after him and making Mamoon the permanent ruler of Khorasan and other eastern countries. He exhorted Ameen not to depose Mamoon from the governorship of Khorasan and advised Mamoon not to disobey Ameen. When Haroon Rasheed died at Tus, Mamoon was in Merv and Ameen was in Baghdad. Saleh was with Haroon Rasheed. The day after his death the 4<sup>th</sup> of Jamad-at-Thani 193 A.H. the chiefs and soldiers of Haroon's army took the oath at Saleh's hands in Tus for Ameen's caliphate. The officer of the Postal Department Hamwaih at once informed his deputy in Baghdad of the incident. He therefore conveyed to Ameen the news of Haroon's death and Ameen's succession. Saleh bin Haroon also reported the matter to his brother Ameen and

congratulated him on becoming Caliph and sent to him the caliph's ring, staff and coverlet. At that time Haroon Rasheed's wife and Ameen's mother Zubaidah Khatoon was in Riqqah and the caliph's treasury was under her procession. At the receipt of this news, Ameen went to the central mosque and delivered a sermon to the people. He narrated how Haroon died and took the oath from the people. At this news Ameen's mother along with the royal treasury left Riqqah for Baghdad. Ameen went to Ambar to receive her and brought her to Baghdad with great honor. When Mamoon in Merv heard the news of his father's death, he assembled all the Amirs and commanders and sought their views as to what he should do. Notables among them were Abdullâh bin Mâlik, Yahya bin Maaz, Shabeeb bin Humaid bin Qahtabah, Allamah Hajeb Abbas bin Zuhair, Ayyub bin Abi Sameer, Abdur Rahman bin Abdul Mâlik bin Saleh and Fadal bin Sahal. Mamoon and all these leaders had been with Haroon Rasheed on the journey from Baghdad to Jurjan. During the journey, Fadal bin Sahal tried to attract the commanders and other leaders to Mamoon and many of them assured him that they would join Mamoon's supporters. However, Fadal bin Rabi who was Ameen's supporter arrived in Tus and after Haroon's death and due to Fadal bin Rabi's efforts all who were present in Tus, took the oath for Ameen and went to Baghdad without thinking that they should have paid a visit to Mamoon in keeping with Haroon's will that Mamoon was the owner of all the armies and provisions of the journey. All the chiefs who were with Mamoon supported him as the ruler of the eastern countries. Some of them advised him that Fadal bin Rabi was still on the way and he could be brought back with the help of the army. But Fadal bin Sahal disapproved it saying, "If they are brought back in this way, there is apprehension that they will play false and prove harmful. Although, it is certainly proper that those who professed obedience and promised help and sympathy should be contacted through messenger and be reminded of their promises they made to Haroon Rasheed in response to his will." So two messengers were sent. When they visited Fadal and the others, they found them to be their adversaries. Some abused Mamoon openly. They barely escaped, with their lives and returned with great difficulty then they reported all they had seen with their eyes. Mamoon was sure that he would not

be allowed to bring under his control the eastern countries, this made him very worried and thoughtful. Fadal bin Sahal, in the east, took up the gauntlet to make Mamoon the caliph. There were people among Mamoon's men who disliked him to be the caliph but wanted him to remain in power the eastern countries. But Fadal bin Sahal and his friends did not like Ameen's caliphate and were in favor of Mamoon to be the caliph. Fadal bin Sahal's father Sahal was a new Muslim who was originally a Zoroastrian who embraced Islam in Haroon Rasheed's times and it was Haroon who appointed his son Fadal as clerk to his own son Mamoon. Because of his cultural preferences, he wanted to make Mamoon the Caliph.

The fact was that Ameen's mother, Zubaidah Khatoon, was a Hasimiite which gave him the support of the Arabs. Mamoon's mother was Iranian by race therefore, the Iranians and the Khorasanis supported Mamoon. Ameen was present among the Arabs in Baghdad and Mamoon was among his supporters the Iranians in Merv. Zubaidah Khatoon hated Mamoon. The Arab leaders who supported the Abbasids disliked the Alawiites. However, in Khorasan the supporters of the Alawiites were found in large number. Jafar Barmuk, who supported the Alawiites, was Mamoon's tutor. Therefore, Mamoon was more popular in the eastern countries like Khorasan. Fadal bin Rabi who hated the Barmuk family was displeased with Mamoon. In brief, Mamoon and Ameen's intentions were not clear and not without selfish concerns and they were surrounded by leaders, who were divided into two groups both antagonistic to each other. Therefore, immediately after Haroon's death both these groups under the leadership of Ameen and Mamoon started a trial of strength and were not pleased with each other. In order to win the hearts of the Khorasanis one quarter of their taxes were excused in addition to promising them a grant of honor and promotions for the Khorasani leaders. The Iranians were overjoyed and said, "Mamoon Rasheed is our sister's son. He will definitely raise our status and authority." On the other side Mamoon called the scholars and legal experts of Merv and said, "Please influence the people through your sermons and keep the situation under control." Under the prevailing conditions, the wisest step that Mamoon Rasheed took was that he wrote to Ameen Rasheed fervently trying

his best to assure him of his respect and loyalty.

If Caliph Ameen Rasheed had been patient and far-sighted, Mamoon Rasheed would have probably become involved in something illegal and uncalled for and would have been declared guilty and blameworthy in the eyes of the people and probably would not have succeeded. However, Fadal bin Rabi and the other counselors did not prove worthy and Ameen did not show any trace of wisdom. All his activities convinced the people that he was not capable to run the caliphate. As soon as he assumed power, he committed the first mistake. He deposed his brother Qasim, Motamin, from the governorship of the Jazirah leaving him with the provinces of Qansareen and Awasim only in the beginning of his caliphate and deputed Khuzaima bin Khazim to Jazirah. The same year, on the advice of Fadal bin Rabi, he wanted to replace Mamoon by his own son Musa bin Ameen as the heir apparent and this gave Mamoon a chance to oppose him justly. At the time when Haroon Rasheed was going to Khorasan, he had announced that the army and the entire supply of weapons and provisions would be under the authority of Mamoon and that he would be in charge. However, Fadal bin Rabi took the entire army, weapons and the provisions which were present at the time of Haroon's death, to Baghdad leaving Mamoon very weak. Fadal bin Rabi had the apprehension that if Mamoon succeeded Ameen as Caliph, he would deal harshly with him. He tried to have Mamoon deposed from the succession to protect himself. Ali bin Isa, the governor of Khorasan, considered himself in the same position so he seconded Fadal's proposal and persuaded Ameen to remove Mamoon. When the issue was put before Khuzaima bin Khazim, he dissented from it and stopped the Caliph from undertaking this action for the time being. This news continued to reach Mamoon but he kept quiet and waited for the results.

### **Rafe and Harsimah in the Service of Mamoon**

It has been stated above that Harsimah had laid a siege to Rafe at Samarkand and Rafe was still at large when Haroon died in Tus. Rafe's brother, Basheer, was arrested and brought to Haroon Rasheed who had him killed.

After Haroon's death Harsimah bin Ayun entered Samarkand by force and occupied it, at the time he was accompanied by Tahir bin Husain. Rafe escaped and ran away from Samarkand and took refuge with the Turks. He came back with a Turkish army to fight with Harsimah but he lost this battle. Rafe became estranged from the Turks and he became very weak. He sent his messenger to Mamoon and begged for pardon and safety. Mamoon granted it to him and he came to Merv in his service. He was given a warm reception. Harsimah visited Mamoon and Mamoon made him an officer of his cavalry. It was during the same period that Mamoon deposed Abbas bin Abdullâh bin Mâlik from the governorship of Rayy.

### **Ameen and Mamoon as open Rivals**

Ameen received the news in Baghdad that Mamoon had made Harsimah an officer of his cavalry and accepted Rafe as his companion with honor and deposed Abbas bin Abdullâh as the governor of Rayy. He was justifiably displeased to hear this and expunged Mamoon's name from the Friday sermon and entered his son's name as heir apparent. He then sent Abbas bin Musa bin Isa bin Jâfar and Muhammad bin Isa bin Naheek to Mamoon with the message, that said, "Agree to my son superceding you as heir apparent and make an announcement to the effect that Musa bin Ameen is the heir apparent in your place." Mamoon rejected this and Fadal bin Sahal took advantage of the situation. He converted Abbas bin Musa to his camp secretly and persuaded him to remain stationed in Baghdad and work as to spy and communicate any important information. Ameen had asked Mamoon to withdraw from the governorship of a few states in Khorasan, which he refused immediately. When Mamoon was informed that his name had been removed from the Friday sermon in Baghdad, he also deleted Ameen's name from sermons in Khorasan. Ameen tore up the document that was hung on the Ka'bah by Haroon. This occurred in the beginning of 194 A.H. From this point forward Mamoon Rasheed had the right to oppose Ameen openly. Mamoon very carefully sealed Khorasan so that no letter or messenger of Ameen's could enter it and create any unrest or revolt there.

## **Unrest in the Provinces**

When the news of the enmity between the two brothers caused by the removal of the document from the Ka'bah and tearing it into pieces, and the removal of their names from their respective sermons became common knowledge, forces that breed on dissension began to appear. Khagan, Tibet, the lands of the Turks and Kabul territories that paid their taxes and were loyal to the Islamic authority, began to revolt. The news upset Mamoon however, on the advice of Fadal bin Sahal he wrote mild letters to the Kings of those lands, excused the taxes of some and allowed concessions to some and thereby strengthened the bond of reconciliation with them. Mamoon's worries were short lived and no disturbances inside his territory were created because most of the Khorasanis supported Mamoon wholeheartedly and wanted to defeat Ameen who was supported by the Arabs. Negative forces of dissension caused unrest, and disturbances surfaced in the provinces under Ameen and they proved more dangerous to him. Only one man from among the Banu Umayyah dynasty had survived named Ali bin Abdullâh bin Khalid bin Yazid bin Muawiya. His mother was Nafisah bint Obaidullah bin Abbâs bin Ali bin Abi Talib. He was known as Siffenane. He used to say, "I am the son of the chiefs of Siffen, that is, Muawiya's and Ali's son." He was educated and wise. Seeing Ameen and Mamoon preparing to confront each other he revolted in Syria and the Syrian tribes, which had connections with Banu Umayyah, joined him. Ameen sent his army to Syria and it was defeated. Syria remained unstable for several years. At last in 198 A.H., Siffenane was defeated by some other Syrian tribes and he fled from Syria and the Syrians captured Damascus. When Ameen had the document of Ka'bah torn into pieces, Dawood bin Isa refused to obey him and contended to the inhabitants of Madinah and the Hijaz, "Ameen is unjust to Mamoon. What we have promised before to Haroon Rasheed, we should keep it and we must never take the oath of succession for Musa who is only a baby." His efforts bore fruit and all the inhabitants of the Hijaz recognize Mamoon as Caliph and removed Ameen's name from the Friday sermons. Dawood bin Musa then left Makkah for Merv via Basra, Persia and Kerman and apprised Mamoon of the situations in the Hijaz. Mamoon was very pleased

with him and appointed him governor of Makkah. That occurred in 196 A.H. In brief, disobedience and rebellions damaged Ameen considerably. Mamoon suffered no damage or loss and that was a pointer to the fact that Ameen was wanting in his capability of governing the land.

## **The Romans**

Just a few days before Haroon Rasheed's death the Roman emperor Nagfoor was killed in the battle of Barjān. His son succeeded him after his death. He also died after two months. Then his sister's son-in-law Michael bin Jarjees sat on the throne. When the Romans rebelled against him the next year 194 A.H., he left the capital and joined a band of ascetics. Then the Romans chose their commander in chief as their King. In short, at the time when internal riots and disturbances were taking place in Haroon's government, the Roman Empire was not free from similar complications.

## **The Tug of War between Ameen and Mamoon**

During the last days of 194 A.H., Ameen removed Mamoon as heir apparent and Mamoon expunged Ameen's name from the Friday sermon. After that, Ameen not only replaced Mamoon by his own son as heir apparent but also deposed his brother Motamin and replaced him by his other son Abdullāh as second heir apparent. Now Musa and Abdullāh's names were read in the sermons. There was nothing to stop Ameen and Mamoon from fighting with each other for superiority. Mamoon conferred the title of Dhurriyasatain on Fadal bin Sahal and appointed him as the Prime Minister. Tahir bin Husain bin Mus'ab bin Zaraq bin Asad Khaza'i was made commander-in-chief of the army. Fadal bin Sahal went to the border state of Rayy and recruited veteran soldiers and by recruiting the people of the border regions formed an army and gave it to the commander. Tahir bin Husain appointed Abul Abbas Khazai the Commander of the army of Rayy. Abul Abbas equipped and fully armed his troops. On the other side, Ameen Rasheed sent Esmat bin Hamunad bin Salim with an army of infantry to Hamadan and ordered him to stay there and send the vanguard to Sadah, then he prapered a huge army under



commandership of Ali bin Isa bin Mahan and sent it to Khorasan to face Mamoon. It was a great mistake on the part of Ameen and his Minister Fadal bin Rabi to send Ali bin Isa as commander to Khorasan because the inhabitants of Khorasan had been displeased with Ali bin Isa when he was governor there. As soon as they heard about his approach, they became determined to fight even more. Ameen handed over to Ali bin Isa Nahawand, Hamadan, Qum and Isfahan as feudal estates for him and gave him cash and equipment for more than his needs, he sent him a 50,000 man cavalry. He issued commands to all the administrators and officials to send reinforcements and every type of aid to him. When Ali bin Isa came to Ameen's mother Zubaidah Khatoon to say good-bye to her, she instructed him to refrain from showing disrespect to Mamoon if he was captured. In Shābān 195 A.H. he set out from Baghdad. Caliph Ameen along with officials of the government went with them for a little distance. The army was so large and impressive that the people of Baghdad had not seen the like of it before. When Ali bin Isa arrived near Rayy, his companions advised him to make fortifications and assign a vanguard. But Ali said, "Fortifications and vanguards are not needed to fight a man like Tahir." Hearing the news of Ali approaching near, Tahir also left Rayy and at a distance of five miles from Rayy, they clashed. Ali bin Isa had more than 50,000 fighters while Tahir had only 4,000 men. The distinction of strength between the two armies was so great that Ali bin Isa said to his men at the time of forming lines. "They need not be killed. They should be surrounded and captured." Seeing the huge army some of Tahir bin Husain's men fled at the time of marshalling of the troops in battle array and came to Ali bin Isa to reap the benefits of belonging to the victorious side and be safe from defeat. However, Ali bin Isa broke the rebels up and turned some out and captured others. This benefited Tahir considerably making every soldier in his army ready to fight for his life. Tahir bin Husain's right and left flanks were defeated by Ali bin Isa's right and left flanks and they fled. Tahir, taking the center of his army, launched such a fierce attack on the middle part of Ali bin Isa's army that they had to withdraw. Seeing this, the defeated right and left flanks of Tahir's army returned and courageously joined him. A very fierce clash took place and during the turmoil of battle, an arrow



pierced Ali bin Isa's neck and killed him. As he fell, his army began to retreat. Tahir's men chopped off Ali bin Isa's head. His victorious army chased the runaways for two miles and kept killing and capturing the Baghdad troops. The darkness of night intervened and saved them from further death and captivity. Tahir bin Husain came back to Rayy and sent a victory letter to Mamoon:

To,

Amir al-Muminin

Respectfully, I beg to state that I am writing this letter in such a situation that Ali bin Isa's head is lying before me, his ring is on my finger and his army is under my command.

The letter took three days to reach Fadal bin Sahal in Merv. He carried it to Mamoon and congratulated him on his victory and the officials of his government saluted him as the Amir al-Muminin. After two days Ali's head also arrived which was taken around the country and shown to the people.

When Baghdad received the news of Ali bin Isa's death, Ameen gave an army of 20,000 men to Abdur Rahman bin Jablah Ambari to fight with Tahir. Ambari was bestowed with the letter of governorship of Hamadan and Khorasan urging him to go, capture and form his government. Abdur Rahman bin Jablah arrived at Hamadan and besieged its fort. When Tahir received the news, he took his army and marched towards Hamadan. Abdur Rahman Jablah left Hamadan to fight him. In the very first assault, Tahir defeated and forced them to flee. Abdur Rahman went back to Hamadan and made preparations to fight again, they clashed and Abdur Rahman's forces suffered defeat again and he entered Hamadan and took refuge there. Tahir moved forward and encircled the city and the siege became prolonged. During this period, Tahir conquered Qazwin making its administrators flee. The prolongation of the siege caused great inconvenience to the civilians and Abdur Rahman apprehended a night attack by the civilians themselves. He begged Tahir to grant him pardon and safety. Tahir granted it and brought Hamadan under his control. Tahir's granting Abdur Rahman pardon and safety allowed Abdur Rahman to live in Hamadan freely. One day Abdur Rahman

found an opportunity, collected his men and launched a sudden attack on Tahir when he was off his guard. Tahir defeated and killed Abdur Rahman. His companions who survived fled and met Huraishi's sons, Abdullah and Ahmad who were coming from Baghdad to help him. Both were overawed at the prospect of fighting Tahir and they returned and went back to Baghdad without fighting. Tahir began to conquer city after city. He reached Halwan and made fortifications and had trenches dug. After these conquests, Mamoon made a proclamation that the oath for caliphate should be taken in every city and his name should be mentioned in the Friday sermon. It was at this point that he appointed Fadal bin Sahal as his Prime Minister. Under Fadal bin Sahal, Ali bin Hisham was made the Defense Minister and Naim bin Khâzim Finance Minister and superintendent of the office of letters and composition. Fadal bin Sahal's brother Hasan bin Sahal, was made an officer in the Ministry of Taxes.

### **Disturbances in Caliph Ameen's Government**

When Baghdad received the news of Abdur Rahman bin Jablah's death while fighting with Tahir, there was an uproar in the city. The Caliph called Asad bin Yazid bin Mizyad and sent him to confront Tahir. Asad bin Yazid said to him, "Please give my army salaries for a year in advance in addition to arms and equipment and promise that you will leave under our control any of the countries we capture. Give me veteran and brave fighters sorting out the weak ones." Ameen flew into a rage when he heard these conditions and sent him to jail. Then he sent for Abdullah bin Humaid bin Qahtabah and asked him to go and fight with Tahir. He also laid down similar conditions. He was also punished. Then Ameen called Asad bin Yazid's uncle Ahmad bin Mizyad and begged him to excuse him for imprisoning Asad and asked him to face Tahir. Ahmad bin Mizyad recommended to him to release Asad and he was freed. Ahmad bin Mizyad then left Baghdad with 20,000 fighters. Seeing this, Abdullah bin Humaid bin Qahtabah expressed his willingness to go fight with another 20,000 soldiers. Both set out for Halwan together. They both camped at Khafeqeen near Halwan with their forces. Tahir learned of their position and he also arrived there with his army. He spread his spies

among the Baghdad army in disguise and they spread the rumors that the treasury in Baghdad had become empty and the soldiers were going without salary. The soldiers began looting what ever they could. This created confusion and anarchy. Some of the spies contradicted the rumor while others confirmed it. The situation deteriorated and there was dissension and quarrels among the troops and they returned to Baghdad without fighting. Tahir moved forward and occupied Halwân. Meanwhile Harsimah bin Ayun came to Tahir at Halwan with a huge army and a letter from Mamoon from Rayy. The letter said:

"You must hand over all the territory you have conquered to Harsimah and march towards Ahwâz."

Tahir complied and marched to Ahwâz with the army.

### **Deposition and Appointments of Caliph Ameen**

It has been stated above that Caliph Haroon Rasheed had imprisoned Abdul Malik bin Saleh for his complicity with the Barmuk family. Immediately after assuming power, Ameen set him free. When the Baghdad armies began to suffer repeated defeats at the hands of Tahir, Abdul Malik bin Saleh went to the Caliph's court and said, "The Syrians and not the Iraqis should be sent to fight with the Khorasanis for they can fight more valiantly and I stand surety to their obedience and loyalty." Caliph Ameen gave him the letter of governorship for Syria and Jazirah and sent him there. He reached Riqqah and entered into correspondence with the nobles of Syria and formed a large army of Syrians. Husain bin Ali bin Isa was also with Abdul Malik heading the part of the army that consisted of Khorasanis. Abdul Malik fell ill and died during this period. A civil war broke out between the Syrians and the Khorasanis. The Syrians proceeded towards their homes. Husain bin Ali bin Isa took the Khorasani army with him and went to Baghdad. The civilians and the nobility of Baghdad welcomed him. Ameen called him to his court at night but Husain refused to go. The next morning having persuaded his men to depose Ameen, he came to the bridge leading into the city. There was a confrontation with Ameen's army, which was defeated. Husain bin Ali attacked the Caliph's palace, arrested Ameen and his

mother Zubaidah Khatoon and imprisoned them in Mansoor's palace and took the oath from the people for Mamoon's caliphate. The next day they demanded their daily allowances but they did not receive as much as they required and that began gossip among the people. Slowly and gradually, the inhabitants of Baghdad began to express their sorrow at Ameen's deposition and arrest. They united and clashed with Husain bin Ali bin Isa. Husain bin Ali bin Isa fought a very fierce battle with them in which Husain bin Ali bin Isa was defeated and captured. The citizens went to Mansoor's palace and freed Ameen and Zubaidah Khatoon. They had Ameen sit on the throne of the Caliphate and took the oath with him again and they brought Husain in chains before Ameen. Ameen reproached him and then pardoned him and said to him, "Make amends for your mistake by going to fight with Tahir and defeat him and gain respect and fame." He was then invested with a robe of honor and sent off with great respect. The civilians of Baghdad accompanied him to the bridge congratulating him. When the crowd thinned, Husain crossed the bridge and ran away announcing that he was still a rebel. Ameen sent some cavalry after him. They caught him at a distance of three miles from Baghdad and after a light skirmish he was killed. His head was cut off and brought to Ameen. This occurred on 15 Rajab 196 A.H. The same day Fadal bin Rabi who was Ameen's Prime Minister, disappeared mysteriously and no one knew his whereabouts. Ameen was very worried over Fadal bin Rabi's disappearance and betrayal.

### **Tahir's Conquests**

While Baghdad was witnessing these destructive events, Tahir bin Husain handed over the conquered territories to Harsimah bin Ayun in Halwan and proceeded to Ahwáz on the orders of Mamoon. Before his departure he sent Husain bin Omar Rustami to intercept any armies coming from Baghdad. Following the return of Abdullah bin Humaid bin Qahtabah and Ahmad bin Mizyad, Caliph Ameen sent Muhammad bin Yazid bin Hatim from Baghdad to defend Ahwáz. Hearing that Muhammad bin Yazid was coming from Baghdad with an army, Tahir dispatched a few divisions of his army to reinforce Husain bin Omar Rustami and issued orders for them to join Husain bin Omar Rustami as soon as possible. When Muhammad bin Yazid

reached Mokarram, he was informed of the reinforcements sent by Tahir. He did not think it proper to face them before he first captured Ahwāz. He arrived at Ahwāz where he faced Tahir. Following a bitter battle Muhammad bin Yazid was killed. Tahir captured Ahwāz and sent administrators to Yamama, Bahrain and Oman. Then he went to Wasit. Its ruler ran away and Tahir easily captured it. Then he sent his forces to Kufa. The governor, Abbas bin Hadi, quickly announced Ameen's deposition and took the oath for Mamoon's caliphate and wrote a letter to Tahir to that effect. The governor of Basra, Mansoor bin Mahdi also followed suit. Kufa and Basra were the most important and strategic locations in Iraq. The governors of both these places were related to the family of the caliph. They preferred Mamoon to Ameen and recognized the overthrow of Ameen and the caliphate of Mamoon and thereby set an example to be followed by others. Dawood bin Isa, the governor of Hijaz who was also from the family of the caliph also took the oath for Mamoon in the Hijaz as has been mentioned above. Even the governor of Mousil, Muttalib bin Abdullāh bin Malik announced Ameen's overthrow and recognized Mamoon as caliph and took the oath. Tahir retained them all in their posts. He camped at Jarjaraya and sent Harith bin Hisham and Dawood bin Musa to Qasr bin Hubairah. This event took place in Rajab 196 A.H. when Baghdad was witnessing the deposition and accession of Ameen caused by Husain bin Ali bin Isa as mentioned previously.

Assuming power again after being removed Caliph Ameen sent Muhammad bin Sulaiman and Muhammad bin Hammad Berberi to Qasr bin Hubairah and Fadal bin Musa to Kufa. Harith and Dawood fought with Muhammad Sulaiman and Muhammad bin Hammad and after a hard fight forced them to flee back to Baghdad. Tahir then deputed Muhammad bin Ala to face Fadal bin Musa. When they met each other on the way, Fadal said to Muhammad bin Ala, "You have unjustly come to fight with me. I have come as an obedient man to Mamoon." At night Fadal attacked Muhammad's troops. However, Muhammad bin Ala anticipated a possible night attack, and was on his guard. He gave Fadal a tough fight, defeated and forced him to flee to Baghdad. Then Tahir turned his attention to Madain where Caliph Ameen's biggest army was deployed and reinforcements and supplies from Baghdad continued to reach there uninterrupted. As

soon as Tahir had arrived there, Ameen's entire army fled to Baghdad. He captured Madain and camped at the Sarsar River and had a bridge constructed there. When Caliph Ameen sent his armies to Qasr bin Hubairah and Kufa, he had also sent Ali bin Muhammad bin Isa bin Naheek to fight Harsimah bin Ayun. The battle took place at Nahrwân. Harsimah defeated Ali bin Muhammad's army and put them to flight, captured Ali bin Muhammad and sent him to Mamoon at Merv. He himself came to Nahrwân instead of Halwân and camped there.

### **The Death of Ameen**

Every army deployed by Ameen was defeated by Mamoon's commanders and his two powerful generals Tahir bin Husain and Harsimah bin Ayun continued to march towards Baghdad from two different directions. After the provinces of Mousil, Wasit, Kufa, Basra, Hijaz and Yamama, went out of Ameen's control his caliphate was confined to Baghdad and its outskirts. Following the continual failures of his armies, a very critical and dangerous period started for Ameen from Ramadan 196 A.H. Being compelled Ameen sent secret messages to the soldiers in Tahir's army and conspired to win them over in exchange for gifts. By this method, 5,000 soldiers from Tahir's army stationed at the Sarsar River went over to Ameen in Baghdad. Then some military commanders also joined Ameen. He honored them and bestowed on them gifts and rewards in accordance with their qualifications and status. He was able to form a huge army and sent it to face Tahir. The battle raged from the morning to the evening resulting ultimately in the defeat and collapse of Ameen's army. The runaways arrived in Baghdad and Ameen formed a new and fresh army that did not include any of the defeated soldiers and sent it again to Sarsar. It also met the same fate. Now Tahir and Harsimah left Sarsar and Nahrwân respectively and set out for Baghdad. Tahir camped at Ambâr and Harsimah made fortifications at the river. Abdullah bin Waddah camped at Shamasiyah and Musayyab bin Zuhair at the palace of Kalwâze. In this way, Mamoon's generals encircled Baghdad and put the civilian population to great difficulty. Meanwhile, Ameen sold his gold and silver ornaments, utensils and precious goods and disbursed salaries to his army and spent all he had on defense. The siege continued for about one year and three

months. Whatever difficulties and inconveniences the people of Baghdad and Ameen's generals had to undergo and the bravery with which they fought are undoubtedly worthy of praise but all those acts were fruitless and unwise. Sayeed bin Qadim received security and pardon and joined Tahir who entrusted him with the task of digging moats and finishing the fortifications. The besiegers included Harsimah and Tahir, two great generals, but Tahir by virtue of his conquests and fighting ability was more popular and he was regarded as the Commander-in-chief of the entire army. Ameen had deputed a few chiefs at Qasr Saleh and Qasr Sulaiman situated outside of Baghdad and next to the Tigris River. They were engaged in launching fireballs and stones with the help of catapults in order to break the dikes and fortifications of the besieging army. Tahir was replying in kind by shooting stones and fireballs. The besieging army advanced and quickly dug moats and more fortifications. They reached the city wall by narrowing the circle of the siege and entered by the city gate and by pulling down and over running the battlements. Then they had to fight in every district and at every step until they surrounded Ameen in Madinat al-Mansoor (the royal district). There was a ban on the import of grain and other necessities of life, criminals were released from the jails and the wicked and evil ran rampant in the city. Influential and brave generals continued to leave Ameen and join Tahir due to his efforts to bring them to his side.

The nobility of the city kept leaving and many districts were deserted. Muhammad bin Isa, Yahya bin Ali bin Isa bin Hamân and Muhammad bin Abi Abbas Tai joined Tahir one after another. The places they were defending also surrendered to Tahir. Ameen stood like a rock in defense. At last he entrusted all the war operations to Muhammad bin Isa bin Naheek. The newly recruited Baghdad army attacked on the side where the army of Abdullâh bin Waddâh was camped and defeated him and captured Shamasiyah. Harsimah rushed to aid him. He was also defeated and taken captive. His men through trickery were able to release him. When Tahir was informed of the setbacks, he himself went to that side, led a very fierce attack and made Ameen's army retreat and had Abdullâh bin Waddah reestablish the front. By degrees, Tahir distributed his army all over the city and besieged Ameen in the royal district. Ameen stood the



hardships of the siege with great perseverance. From among the officials of his governments only Hatim bin Saqr, Hasan Huraishi and Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Aghlab Afriqi accompanied him. Muhammad bin Ibrahim Aghlab said to Ameen,

"Even in this deteriorating situation 7,000 cavaliers are ready to carry out your every order. You should select the sons of the nobility and the officials of the government and appoint an officer to lead them leave through a gate when the enemies are off their guard and go to Jazirah and Syria and found a new government. It is possible that after some time the people may be inclined towards you and a good way to achieve your goals may emerge."

If Ameen had acted upon this advice, he would not have met the fate he encountered. When Tahir came to know of Ameen's intention he wrote to Sulaiman bin Mansoor and Muhammad bin Isa bin Naheek that if they did not stop him from doing so, it would not be good for them. Afraid of Tahir both went to Ameen and said, "It is not proper for the Amir al-Muminin to surrender to Ibn Aqhlab and Ibn Saqr. They are untrustworthy and unreliable. It is better to receive pardon and safety from Harsimah bin Ayun." When Ibn Saqr came to know that Caliph Ameen was ready to seek pardon and safety from Harsimah bin Ayun and hand himself over to him, he said, "O Amir al-Muminin! If you want pardon and safety you must ask Tahir for it." Don't go under Harsimah's security. But Ameen said, "I will not seek pardon and safety from Tahir." Therefore, the message was sent to Harsimah and he gladly agreed. When Tahir was informed, he was determined to stop it thinking that the credit for the victory would go to Harsimah. He placed Ameen's palace under strict surveillance to thwart his attempt to escape. Harsimah had proposed to Ameen that at night he should leave his palace, step into his boat just under the palace and come under his protection. When Harismah saw preparations on Tahir's side to stop him, he sent a message to Ameen requesting him to postpone that night because he had seen some activities on the riverside that indicated danger. Ameen sent back the reply, "All my supporters and sympathizers have parted with me. I cannot stay here even for a moment. I feel apprehension that if Tahir



finds out, he will capture and kill me." Eventually on 25 Muharram 198 A.H. at night, Ameen hugged his two children, kissed them, departed and came to the riverside weeping and sat in the boat. Harsimah who was present in the boat received him respectfully, kissed his hands and ordered the crew to move. As they started, Tahir's war boats surrounded them and began to attack their boat. Tahir's divers made holes in the boat and his men showered arrows from all four sides until it was flooded and sank. The crew caught Harsimah by his hair and saved him. Ameen began to swim and Tahir's men caught him. Ahmad bin Sâlim swam to the bank when he came out of the water, he was also arrested by Tahir's men. Ahmad bin Sâlim says I was arrested and presented before Tahir who threw me into captivity. A short time later Tahir's soldiers opened the door of the prison pushed Ameen in closed the door and then left. He was in his pajamas with a turban on his head and an old cloth over his shoulders. I read *إنا لله و إنا إليه راجعون* (To Allah do we belong and to Him is our return) and began to cry. He recognized me and asked me to hug him. I was over wrought and nervous. I hugged him. When he came to his senses after some time, he asked me about Mamoon. I told him that he was alive and safe. Ameen said, "His advocate told me that Mamoon was dead. He probably thought that I might become indifferent to him." I said to him, "May Allah's curse be on your ministers who betrayed you." Then he gave vent to a cold sigh and said, "Why brother! Will these people not honor their word of pardon and safety? I said, "Inshallah they will keep it." As we were talking, Muhammad bin Humaid came, stood at a distance watching, recognized Ameen and went back. At midnight, a few non-Arabs entered the prison with naked swords in their hands. Ameen began to move backward slowly to see them. One of them rushed forward, caught hold of him, threw him on the ground, slaughtered him, chopped off his head and returned with it. When morning came, they took away his dead body.

Tahir had Ameen's head publicly displayed. When the people had seen it fully, he sent it with the Caliph's ring, staff and coverlet to Mamoon through his cousin Muhammad bin Hasan bin Zuraiq bin Mus'ab and made a proclamation in the city to this effect. On Friday, he read the sermon in the name of Mamoon at the central mosque and

condemned Ameen. He sent Ameen's sons, Musa and Abdullah to Mamoon. He then sent Ameen's mother Zubaidah Khatoon to a place near the river Zab. Tahir's army demanded their allowances. When they were not met, they rebelled. Tahir had to leave Baghdad to save his life. Then he called all his leaders, formed a group, entered Baghdad and forced the soldiers and the inhabitants of the city to obey him.

### **A Review of Ameen's Caliphate**

Caliph Ameen was 27 or 28 years old. He had been caliph for 4 years and 7 months. His entire reign was plagued with riots and carnage. Thousands of Muslims were killed for only political reasons. His regime was one of troubles, evils and misfortunes for the world of Islam. Ameen was well versed in syntax and literature and composed verse proficiently, he honored the scholars but he was inclined to sports and amusement. In matters of administration and expeditions, he was a misfit. Immediately after becoming Caliph, he ordered a polo field to be built near the palace of Mansoor. He paid special attention to decoration and beautification projects. He was fond of singing and playing musical instruments and worshipping beauty. His greatest trouble was the body of selfish ministers none of whom ever reminded him that he was a soldier and he should not dally with women.

In brief, Ameen was overwhelmed with his own youthful passions and totally devoid of the ability to conquer and rule. Fadal bin Rabi, his Prime Minister, did not prove to be a good minister for the dynasty of the Abbasids. It was he who was instrumental in having the army and the equipment which should have remained under Mamoon's control in keeping with Haroon's will, brought from Tus to Baghdad. He tried to harm Mamoon and sowed seeds of contention between the two brothers. Mamoon would have probably tolerated this as a small matter and Ameen would not have turned against Mamoon just for the sake of his extravagance. However, the next destructive act that Fadal bin Rabi had Ameen accomplish was beyond the limit of reconciliation. The removal of Mamoon from the succession and the installation of his own infant son as the next Caliph destroyed Haroon's well-documented plans for his sons. In order to

establish the succession of his son, Ameen had to capture the territory that belonged to Mamoon in accordance with Haroon's will and distribution. He had the official document of Caliph Haroon Rasheed removed from the Ka'bah and destroyed at the instance of Fadal bin Rabi. Consequently, all the influential members of the Abbasid dynasty were offended and disgusted with him at the inferred disrespect to his father and even the holy sites.

If we ponder a little we can easily infer that the man who is responsible for all this damage done to Islam is Haroon Rasheed. The biggest blunder and the most condemnable act of Haroon Rasheed was that he was dishonest in naming his successors. He knew that Mamoon was more capable and deserving yet he chose Ameen to take the caliphate. A plea may be offered from Haroon's side that Ameen was noble born from both sides and a pure Hashimiite and Mamoon's mother was Iranian and he had apprehensions that Mamoon would weaken the Arab elements and promote and strengthen Iranian authority and power.

Haroon chose Ameen as his successor because he was a pure Arab and Hashimiite and he believed Ameen would successfully continue his policy of breaking the Iranians power that he had adopted at the end of his caliphate. Ameen's heart and mind were not suited for this purpose. Haroon was aware of this in the last year of his life and he had become fully convinced of Mamoon's ability to rule and Ameen's inability. If we go deeper, we will find that Haroon Rasheed was not at fault but the fundamental policy adopted and followed by the Abbasids from the very beginning of their dynasty was bound to yield these results. First, the Abbasids opposed the Arabs by using the Khorasanis. They put all their energy into effacing and destroying Arab power and influence and made the newly converted Khorasanis the leaders. Mention has been made above about the order given by the leaders of the Abbasids to Abu Muslim not to spare even a single Arabic speaking soul and Abu Muslim put to death 600,000 Arabs in Khorasan and Iran. The joint efforts of the Alawiites and the Abbasids aimed against Banu Umayyah weakened the Arab's influence and power and strengthened the Khorasanis, Persians and Iraqis. Every conspiracy against Banu Umayyah that proved fruitful was supported

and implemented by the Iraqis and the Khorasanis. When the Banu Umayyah were destroyed, the Alawiites stood as mute spectators while the Abbasids became the masters of the caliphate and authority. When the Alawiites began to oppose the Abbasids and initiated a series of conspiracies against them, the Abbasids received aid from the Iraqis and Khorasanis.

Those who were goaded to kill the Arabs against Banu Umayyah became the greatest threat to the Abbasids. The Khorasanis power continued to rise until the regime of Mansoor Abbasi. Only for the short span of a few years during Mahdi's caliphate the Khorasanis rise stood still and the Arabs were honored. During Hadi and Haroon's regimes, the Khorasanis continued to increase their power. In the last years of his caliphate, Haroon realized that by weakening the Arabs they had harmed the caliphate considerably. He tried to correct the situation but death did not allow him to do so. During Ameen's reign, the center of strength for the Arabs was Ameen and Mamoon for the Khorasanis. In other words, the clash between the two races Arabs and Iranians manifested itself through Ameen and Mamoon. Because Ameen was personally incapable and Mamoon was more capable, the Arab group lost and the Iranians became the masters of the Islamic world. The Khorasanis held Mamoon dear in order to bring under their control the machinery of the government and hand it over to the Alawiites after Mamoon. Due to the sequence of events, they did not succeed and the government and the caliphate remained with the Abbasid dynasty. Later, the Khorasanis and newly converted Turks gathered enough courage and power to decimate the power of the Islamic Caliphate and form their own separate kingdoms. The details of which will follow in the next chapter. The substance of the matter is that the curse of the son succeeding his father and inherited rule is the root cause of these evils, troubles and defects in the Islamic Caliphate and it was this innovation that has done the greatest harm to the Muslims and kept the inherent justice of Islamic government from being maintained. The defects of Ameen's regime were the by products of the curse of inherited succession.

It is a coincidence that the three Caliphs Ali (☪), Imam Hasan (☪) and

Ameen Rasheed were Hashimiite from both mother and father and the Caliphate did not obviously suit them. That is, the entire regime of Ali (ؑ) passed in internal conflicts and civil war among the Muslims and eventually he was martyred. Imam Hasan (ؑ) renounced the Caliphate and he still was poisoned to death. Similarly, Ameen's entire period of rule was dominated by internecine fights at the end of which he too was killed.

Maktab-e-Ashraf

## Chapter 4

# **The Caliphate of the Abbasids**

## **(Second Phase)**

### **Mamoon Rasheed**

Mamoon Rasheed bin Haroon Rasheed's given name was Abdullah. His father gave him the title "Mamoon." His kunya (father of \_\_, generally followed by the name of the first son) was Abul Abbas (father of Abbas). He was born on Friday in the middle of Rabi-ul-Awwal 170 A.H. The night Mamoon was born Hadi, his uncle who preceded his father as Caliph, died. His mother's name was Marajil. She was a Zoroastrian slave girl and died within forty days of his birth. She was born in Badghais in Herat. Ali bin Isa, the governor of Khorasan, had presented her as a gift to Haroon Rasheed. Mamoon did not have the opportunity of being brought up in the lap of his mother. However, Haroon Rasheed paid special attention to his upbringing and training. At the age of five, he was put under the tutelage of Kasai Nahvi and Yazeedi. They taught him Qur'an and Arabic literature.

At 12 when Mamoon achieved understanding and intellectual ability by virtue of his divine gifted intelligence, he was made the apprentice of Jafar Barmuk. In the same year 182 A.H., Haroon nominated him to

be the heir apparent after his half brother Ameen. Besides these teachers there were many religious scholars and those blessed with deep knowledge of Islam at Haroon's court and they were requested to educate him from time to time. Mamoon memorized the entire Quran and was a great scholar. He was eloquent and clever. He was slightly older than his brother Ameen. He had studied Islamic Law and Hadith under the guidance of great scholars of these subjects. Haroon had both his sons educated and trained with great interest and attention however, the impact this produced in Mamoon was not shared by Ameen.

Although Mamoon Rasheed had been the ruler of the eastern countries including Khorasan since Jumad-al-Thani 193 A.H. when Haroon died, the period of his caliphate begins from Muharram 198 A.H. when Ameen was killed. Ameen was killed on the night of 25 Muharram and the oath for Mamoon's caliphate was taken on Friday 26 Muharram 198 A.H.

When Mamoon was informed about Ameen's murder and the capture of Baghdad by his army and his recognition as caliph by the people of Baghdad, he gave the governorship of Jabal Faras, Ahwaz, Basra, Kufa, Hijaz, and Yemen, to Hasan bin Sahal, the brother of his minister Fadal bin Sahal and sent him to Baghdad. Harsimah bin Ayun and Tahir bin Husain had conquered these territories and it was by virtue of their courage that the people of Baghdad recognized Mamoon as caliph and Ameen was defeated.

Tahir who did the most to achieve the victory expected that he would be given the governorship of the newly conquered territories. Contrary to his expectations it was given to Hasan bin Sahal. Hasan bin Sahal then made Tahir bin Husain the governor of Jazirah, Mousil and Syria and sent him to fight with Nasr bin Sheeth bin Aqeel bin Kab bin Rabia bin Amir who had taken the oath of allegiance to Ameen and had collected a huge army to fight against Mamoon's forces and he continued to conquer territory in Iraq. When Hasan bin Sahal was appointed governor and next to the caliph, the civilians were sure that he would completely dominate Mamoon and the Iranians would be the dominant force in the government. The Arab leaders were worried about these developments and they felt

discouraged and disappointed. They were convinced that Mamoon would retain Merv as his capital in deference to Fadal bin Sahal's wishes and would not come to Baghdad.

When Hasan bin Sahal sent Tahir to face Nasr bin Sheeth bin Aqeel, he only had limited success. He stayed at Riqqah and continued to engage in light skirmishes with Nasr bin Sheeth. While in Riqqah, Tahir received the news of his father Husain bin Zuraig bin Mus'ab's death in Khorasan and Caliph Mamoon's participation in it. Hasan bin Sahal ordered Harsimah bin Ayun to go to Khorasan. Nasr bin Sheeth bin Aqeel rebelled simply because the non-Arabs were given priority over the Arabs. Tahir did not concentrate on defeating Nasr, as he himself disliked the domination of the Arabs by the non-Arabs. Harsimah bin Ayun, who was one of the old devotees of the Abbasid dynasty, looked at the rise of the non-Arabs with apprehension.

### **The Revolt of Ibn Tabataba and Abu Saraya**

Abu Saraya bin Mansoor was related to the tribe of Banu Shaiban. During Ameen's Caliphate, he was in the army of the governor of Jazirah. There he murdered a man belonging to Banu Tamim. When the governor of Jazirah ordered his arrest for the crime, he escaped and with 30 persons who joined him began plundering whatever and wherever they could.

After a short time, he along with his group went to Yazid bin Mizzad in Armenia. Yazid bin Mizzad appointed him to the rank of general. When Yazid bin Mizzad died, he began to live with his son Asad bin Yazid. When Asad was deposed from the governorship of Armenia, Abu Saraya went to Ahmad bin Mizzad. When Ameen deputed Ahmad bin Mizzad to fight with Harsimah, Ahmad bin Mizzad made him chief of the vanguard of the army. Harsimah entered into a conspiracy with him and he went over to Harsimah's side.

He then called the men of his tribe Banu Shaiban to him 2000 of them responded and joined Harsimah's army. Abu Saraya made a recommendation on their behalf and handsome allowances were fixed for them. When Ameen was killed, Harsimah refused to pay the daily allowance to Banu Shaiban. Abu Saraya became angry with him and sought his permission to go for Hajj. Harsimah gave him the



permission plus a sum of 20,000 dirhams for the expenses of his journey. He divided the amount among his men and told them to come to him in one and twos to avoid suspicion. Abu Saraya took leave of Harsimah and left ostensibly for the purpose of Hajj. He halted on the way and 200 men rallied round him there. He arrayed them and invaded Ainuttamar and arrested the rulers there. Ainuttamar was looted and the spoils were distributed among his men. He continued plundering and looted government treasuries in several places.

Harsimah sent an army to punish and arrest him. Abu Saraya defeated them and forced them to escape. More men joined Abu Saraya and his power increased. Then he defeated the ruler of Waquqa and looted the treasury. He went to Ambar, killed its ruler Ibrahim Sharwi, looted the town, and distributed the spoils among his men. He went to Riqqah where he came across Mohammad bin Ibrahim bin Ismail bin Ibrahim bin Hasan bin Muthanna bin Ali who declared his Caliphate and left Riqqah with Abu Saraya. Mohammad bin Ibrahim's father was known as Ibrahim Tabataba and he was known as Ibn Tabataba.

It was at this time that Hasan bin Sahal arrived in the Baghdad after being appointed the governor there and in Yemen and Hijaz. The Arabs in general looked upon the increase of non-Arab power with hatred and apprehension and regarded Mamoon's caliphate as harmful to them and the Alawiites became busy taking advantage of it.

Nasr bin Sheeth announced that he was not an enemy to the Abbasids but he opposed the present regime simply because it preferred non-Arabs to Arabs. The announcement made an impact on the Arab chiefs of the army and their activities were very lax against Nasr bin Sheeth.

Hasan bin Sahal at the same time was displeased with Harsimah and sent him to Khorasan. Abu Saraya took Mohammad bin Ibrahim's (Ibn Tabataba) presence as a sign of good fortune and took the oath for his caliphate. Ibn Tabataba sent Abu Saraya to Kufa by boat along the river and he himself went to Kufa by land. According to plan Abu Saraya and Ibn Tabataba entered Kufa on 15 Jamad-al-Thani 199 A.H. from two different directions and looted the palace of Abbas bin Musa

bin Isa which was the governor's residence and which also housed the royal treasury. The entire city was brought under control and all the civilians took the oath for ibn Tabataba's Caliphate.

When Hasan bin Sahal was informed of the occupation of Kufa by Abu Saraya and Ibn Tabataba, he sent Zuhair bin Musayyib with 10,000 men to Kufa. They came out of Kufa and clashed with Zuhair and defeated him. Abu Saraya looted Zuhair's military camp, killed and plundered the people mercilessly. Ibn Tabataba forbade him to indulge in merciless killing and plundering. Abu Saraya who had become accustomed to such killing and plundering could not tolerate the interference and he had Ibn Tabataba poisoned. The next day he was found dead and the period of his authority and conquest ended. Abu Saraya had a young boy Mohammad bin Jafar bin Mohammad bin Zaid bin Ali bin Husain bin Ali bin Abi Talib, Ibn Tabataba's deputy and took the oath for him and began to run and manage all state affairs using him as a figure head.

### **Abu Saraya's Government and its End**

After being defeated, Zuhair bin Musayyib went to Qasr bin Hubairah and stayed there. Hasan bin Sahal gave Abdus bin Mohammad bin Khalid Marwarozi 4,000 men and sent him to reinforce Zuhair. Zuhair and Abdus attacked Kufa but were defeated and killed on 15 Rajab 199 A.H. while fighting against Abu Saraya. Following the victory Abu Saraya issued coins in his name in Kufa, appointed several Alawiites as governors of several provinces. He sent Abbas bin Mohanmad bin Isa bin Mohammad to Ahwaz, Husain bin Hasan bin Ali bin Husain bin Ali bin Abi Talib known as Aftas to Makkah, Ibrahim bin Musa bin Jafar Sadiq to Yemen and Zaid bin Musa bin Jafar Sadiq to Basra. Abbas captured Basra after defeating its ruler. All the governors of Abu Saraya scored victories. Abu Saraya wrote to Abbas bin Mohammad to take an army from Ahwaz and invade Baghdad from the eastern side while he stayed at Qasr ibn Hubairah. Hasan bin Sahal sent Ali bin Sayeed from Baghdad to Madain in defense of Madain and Wasit. When Abu Saraya found this out, he at once sent an army from Qasr ibn Hubairah, which occupied Madain in Ramadan 199 A.H. before the arrival of Ali bin Sayeed. Abu Saraya

himself left Qasr Ibn Hubairah and camped at the Sarsar River. Ali ibn Sayeed reached Madain and besieged Abu Saraya's army in Shawwal 199 A.H. Receiving the news that his army had been encircled, Abu Saraya left the Sarsar River and marched towards Qasr ibn Hubairah.

When the armies sent by Hasan bin Sahal suffered defeat at the hands of Abu Saraya and his leaders were killed and captured in Rajab 199 A.H., Hasan bin Sahal was very worried. At that time Tahir was in Riqqah and could not leave due to Nasr bin Sheeth. Harsimah had left Baghdad and gone to Khorasan. Except these two commanders, Hasan bin Sahal had no other commander at his disposal to be sent against Abu Saraya. Abu Saraya had begun making preparations to conquer Baghdad. He had already captured Basra, Kufa, Wasit, and Madain, Hasan bin Sahal and Harsimah were at odds with each other. Hasan did not want to seek help from Harsimah but in view of the critical situation, he sent a fast messenger to Harsimah asking him to return and tackle the affair of Abu Saraya. Harsimah did not want to make Hasan bin Sahal's affairs easier. However, since Hasan bin Sahal had personally requested help, he did not think it proper to refuse and immediately returned to Baghdad. He entered the city at the time Abu Saraya had already left the Sarsar River for Qasr Ibn Hubairah after hearing about the siege of Madain. Harsimah left Baghdad in pursuit of Abu Saraya without any hesitation. He came across a group of Abu Saraya's supporters and he surrounded and killed them. He moved quickly and caught up with Abu Saraya. Abu Saraya attacked. The battle resulted in the death of many of his men but Abu Saraya escaped. He went to Kufa and looted the houses of Banu Abbas and their supporters and reduced them to rubble capturing all their goods, belongings and valuables. Harsimah moved forward, and besieged Kufa. Abu Saraya showed great perseverance in defense in a two month long siege of Kufa. Being compelled by the siege, he took Mohammad bin Jafar bin Mohammad and 800 horsemen and escaped from Kufa. Harsimah entered Kufa on 15 Muharram 200 A.H. appointed an administrator there and returned to Baghdad.

Abu Saraya left Kufa for Qadsiyah. Then he went towards Tus. He came across a caravan, which was going from Ahwaz loaded with merchandise. He looted it and distributed the loot among his men.

During the same period, Hasan bin Ali Mamooni expelled Abu Saraya's governor from Ahwaz and occupied it. When Hasan bin Ali heard about Abu Saraya's condition, he took an army from Ahwaz and went in pursuit of Abu Saraya. When they clashed, Abu Saraya suffered a crushing defeat. After being defeated, he went to Rasain in Jalula. Hasan bin Ali quickly surrounded and captured him along with Mohammad Jafar bin Mohammad and sent them to Hasan bin Sahal. He had Abu Saraya slaughtered and hung his corpse on the bridge of Baghdad. He sent his head and the head of Mohammad bin Jafar bin Mohammad to Mamoon. Ali bin Sayeed conquered Madain, slaughtered Abu Saraya's men and went to Wasit and captured it in accordance with Hasan bin Sahal's order and then left Wasit for Basra. He dethroned Zaid bin Musa bin Jafar Sadiq there and captured Basra. Zaid bin Musa set fire to all the houses of Banu Abbas and their supporters. He came to be known as Zaid an-Nâr (Zaid the fire). Ali bin Sayeed arrested Zaid an-Nâr and put him in confinement. In Muharram 200 A.H., the corruption of Abu Saraya in Iraq came to an end but Hijaz and Yemen were still reeling under the disturbances and unrest that he had started.

### **Unrest in Hijaz and Yemen**

As mentioned above, Abu Saraya had appointed many members of the family of Abi Talib as governors and heads of provinces and states. The Alawiites were engaged in a conspiracy against the Abbasid caliphate. It was a display of wisdom on the part of Abu Saraya to appoint Alawiite rulers to provinces and states thereby turning his government into a government of the Alawiites. Although Abu Saraya was dead, most of the Alawiites who were in power in the provinces did not surrender and kept struggling to establish their caliphate. They had an opportunity to establish themselves after Ameen's death because Sahal's sons Fadal and Hasan, who had Mamoon under their control were Iranian by race and considered the family of Abi Talib superior to the family of Abbas so they favored the Alawiites.

Mamoon was educated and trained by Jafar Barmuk and had respect and love in his heart for members of the Prophet's family. His Prime Minister had the opportunity to turn the government towards the

Alawiites after the death of Ameen. However, Hafismah's military acumen put an end to Abu Saraya and cleared Iraq of the Alawiites' style of governing and caused their failure in the Hijaz and Yemen. When Abu Saraya appointed Husain Aftas governor of Makkah, Haroon Rasheed's servant, Masroor with 100 men, was in Makkah. At that time the governor of Makkah appointed by Mamoon was Dawood bin Isa bin Musa Abbasi. Masroor and Dawood heard the news of the arrival of Husain Aftas in Makkah and they convened a meeting of the Abbasids and their supporters to decide what to do. Masroor and others felt that they should fight. However, Dawood said, "I do not like bloodshed at the Haram Shareef. If Husain Aftas enters Makkah by one side, I shall make an exit by the other."

Masroor remained silent and Dawood left for Iraq upon the arrival of Husain Aftas. Masroor also left Makkah. Husain Aftas halted outside Makkah and entered when he heard that the Abbasid governor left Makkah, he entered with only ten men. He made Tawaf, circling the Ka'bah, stayed there for one night and then called for his men to join him and occupied Makkah and began to rule over it.

Having reached Yemen, Ibrahim bin Musa bin Jafar Sadiq expelled Mamoon's governor Ishaq bin Musa bin Isa and began to govern it. Husain Aftas removed the cover of the Ka'bah and put the new one sent by Abu Saraya on, he looted the houses of Banu Abbas, took their valuables by force and then started taking the possessions of the general public in Makkah. He removed the gold from the pillars around the Ka'bah and emptied the treasury and distributed it among his men.

Ibrahim bin Musa arrived in Yemen and started slaughtering and plundering he was called Qassab for massacring people in large numbers. He is still referred to by this name. Other chiefs of the Alawiites who ruled on behalf of Ibrahim bin Musa and Husain Aftas were also involved in looting, killing and plundering. You have read about Zaid bin Musa who was called "Zaid the fire" for perpetrating atrocities. The Alawiites who received power from Abu Saraya for a short period, created disturbances and their tyrannical and merciless acts proved to be their doom. When the news of Abu Saraya's death reached Makkah, the Makkans began to whisper among themselves.

Husain Aftas called on Mohammad bin Jafar Sadiq bin Muhammad Baqar bin Ali bin Husain bin Ali bin Abi Talib and said, "This is the most suitable time. People's hearts are inclined towards you. Abu Saraya has been killed. You should accept the oath for your caliphate. I take the oath at your hands and none will oppose you." Mohammad bin Jafar was ready to take the oath and he began to be addressed as Amir al-Muminin. After this, Husain Aftas and Mohammad bin Jafar's son Ali started criminal activities. They began raping women and became so notorious that it was very difficult for the women of Makkah to protect their chastity. They began to humiliate men and women in public. A group of criminals joined them and they continued their crimes.

One day, Ishaq bin Mohammad, the son of the head judge of Makkah, was passing through the market and Ali bin Mohammad bin Jafar, the Amir al-Muminin's son had him arrested and imprisoned him in his house. The people held a meeting and it was unanimously resolved that Mohammad bin Jafar Sadiq should be removed and the judge's son should be released from the control of Ali bin Mohammad bin Jafar. When they went to the Amir al-Muminin's house and encircled it, they granted his son pardon and safety if he returned the judge's son. He then entered his son's house and found the boy there and handed him over to the people.

It has been mentioned above that Ibrahim bin Musa Kazim known as Ibrahim Qassab had expelled the governor of Yemen, Ishaq bin Musa bin Isa. Ishaq bin Musa went in hiding in Yemen and bided his time. Having observed the oppressive government of the Alawiites and the people's hatred against them, he easily formed an army. Ibrahim came from Makkah. Ishaq left Yemen and decided to invade Makkah. The Alawiites gathered the Bedouins of the adjoining areas, dug out trenches and prepared themselves to face Ishaq. Ishaq marshaled his troops in the battle array but changed his mind and he left for Iraq. Hasan bin Sahal became free from the troubles in Iraq and drew Harsimah's attention to the necessity of putting down the riots in the Hijaz and Yemen. Harsimah gave an army to Raja bin Jameel and Jaludi and sent them to Makkah. While Harsimah's army was on the way to Makkah, Ishaq was coming from there and they met on the

way. Ishaq and his army returned to Makkah with them. They found the Alawiites there quite ready to accept the challenge. After a fierce battle, the Alawiites were defeated and the Abbasid army entered Makkah as victors.

Mohammad bin Jafar asked for pardon and security and it was granted. He went to Juhfa and from there he proceeded to Juhaina where he started gathering an army. When he formed a large army, he invaded Madinah. The governor of Madinah Haroon bin Musayyib fought several battles with them and finally Mohammad bin Jafar Sadiq suffered a crushing defeat and returned to Juhaina. During the battle, he lost an eye and many of his men were killed. The next year during the season of Hajj, he asked the rulers of Makkah Raja bin Jameel and Jaludi for pardon and security and came to Makkah. He gathered the people and delivered a sermon. He said "I thought that Mamoon Rasheed was dead and therefore I took the oath from the people. Now the correct information has come to me that he is still living. Therefore I release you from the oath". Then after performing Hajj, he went to Hasan bin Sahal in 201 A.H. who sent him to Caliph Mamoon. Mamoon treated him with honor. He decided to go to Merv from Iraq and died at Jurjan on the way.

### **The Death of Harsimah bin Ayun**

Fadal bin Sahal had assisted Mamoon very much after Haroon Rasheed's death and provided him with all the materials for the fight against his brother Ameen. Mamoon made him the Prime Minister and the director of the military expeditions and the office of official documents. The Iranians favored Mamoon who had been trained by Jafar Barmuk. He had reduced their taxes of the Iranians by one quarter. Fadal had all the facilities available to dominate over his ministry and was able to dictate to the Caliph. He had persuaded Mamoon to keep Merv as the capital. The Arabs were not able to establish their power in Merv. Had Mamoon Rasheed gone to Baghdad, Fadal bin Sahal would not have enjoyed as much power and the Arabs would not have allowed the Caliph to follow Sahal bin Fadal's dictates. Hasan bin Fadal was appointed as the ruler of Iraq and Hijaz in order to weaken the Arabs. Harsimah and Tahir were two formidable



and powerful generals who performed great feats in the battles that established Mamoon's caliphate. Tahir was more popular than Harsimah but Harsimah's age and length of service raised him in rank and they both enjoyed equal honor at the Caliph's court.

Tahir felt that his killing Ameen hurt Mamoon and this damaged his chance for advancement. Tahir was not given the governorship of the territories he conquered. Sahal bin Fadal was able to appoint his brother, Hasan bin Sahal as the ruler of the Western territories by the order of Mamoon. Tahir was powerless to make any move to break the power of the non-Arabs and bring Mamoon and the government from Merv to Baghdad. Only Harsimah could have done something to draw the Caliph's attention to it in deference to the wishes of the Arabs. Harsimah knew that no letter or application could reach the Caliph direct without passing through Fadal bin Sahal's hands. He also knew that no one could see him without the permission of Fadal. Mamoon Rasheed's condition was like that of a prisoner in his own court.

This was the first example in the history of Islam that a minister had virtually put the Caliph under house arrest and the latter did not realize it. Following Abu Saraya's death and the departure of the army to Makkah Harsimah found out that the caliph was completely in the dark about the rebellions in Iraq and the Hijaz and the general condition of the country. He immediately departed for Khorasan with the intention of going personally to the Caliph's court and apprising him of all the details of Fadal bin Sahal's activities, which he had concealed from him. Without taking permission from Hasan bin Sahal, Harsimah left for Khorasan. When Fadal bin Sahal was informed that Harsimah was on the way to the Caliph's court, he had an order sent by Mamoon that he should go to Syria and the Hijaz where he was needed and that it was not necessary for him to come to Khorasan.

Harsimah already realized the reality of Mamoon's court and therefore did not pay attention to Mamoon's order and depending on his service record and special rights continued to Merv. When he approached Merv, he ordered the drums to be beaten as soon as he entered the city so that the Caliph would know that some commander was entering the city and to stop Fadal bin Sahal from preventing him to go before the Caliph. When Fadal came to know that Harsimah did



not comply with the Caliph's order and continued marching to Merv and had the intention of lodging a complaint against him, he said to Mamoon Rasheed, "I have come to know through a reliable source that Harsimah incited Abu Saraya to rebel against you and when Harsimah was deputed to punish him, he let him escape, and it was Hasan bin Ali who killed him. Only Allah knows his intention but his boldness and impertinence have exceeded all limits, when you ordered him to go to Syria he disobeyed it and is coming to Merv as if he is the ruler."

When Harsimah entered the city with the accompanying uproar of beating drums, Mamoon said, "What is causing this noise?" Fadal said, "Harsimah has arrived and he is entering the city in an insolent manner." Mamoon flew into a rage on hearing this. Finally, Harsimah entered the court but before he could explain the purpose of his visit, Mamoon said, "Why did not you comply with my order?" Harsimah began to offer excuses but Mamoon was so angry that he expelled him from the court dishonorably and sent him to jail. His past performance and achievement could have helped him and Mamoon might have relented and turned to him after cooling down but Fadal bin Sahal did not let this opportunity slip through his fingers. He had him killed and informed Mamoon that he died of natural causes in the jail. Mamoon was not sorry to hear of his death and the condition of Mamoon's court that Harsimah tried to change continued as usual. He died a sad death and there was nobody to undertake the job of informing the Caliph of the truth.

### **Commotion in Baghdad**

When Harsimah was killed in the jail, Hasan bin Sahal was away from Baghdad in Nahrwan. When the news of Harsimah's death reached Baghdad, there was a great outcry and everybody felt that Fadal bin Sahal had captured the Caliph and because Fadal was a Zoroastrian and the son of a Zoroastrian the Arabs would be humiliated. Mohammad bin Abi Khalid promised the people of Baghdad that he would expel Hasan bin Sahal from Iraq and the inhabitants of Baghdad supported him. Mohammad bin Abi Khalid reorganized the army and expelled Ali bin Hisham, the governor appointed by Hasan

bin Sahal, from Baghdad. Hasan bin Sahal sent forces from Nahrwan to Baghdad. Mohammad bin Abi Khalid defeated them and made them flee. Hasan bin Sahal went to Wasit and Mohammad bin Abi Khalid left Baghdad with his army and marched towards Wasit.

Hasan bin Sahal left Wasit when he learned of Mohammad bin Abi Khalid's approach. He entered Wasit and occupied it and then immediately set out in pursuit of Hasan bin Sahal. Mohammad bin Abi Khalid camped at Jarjaraya and after preparing himself clashed with Hasan bin Sahal. Several battles were fought. In one of the battles, he was mortally wounded. His son brought him to Baghdad but he succumbed to the injuries. The natives of Baghdad wanted to make Mansoor bin Mehdi bin Mansoor Abbasi caliph but he declined. Finally, after much persuasion he agreed that Mamoon would remain caliph and his name would continue to be read in the sermon and he would be the Caliph's deputy in place of Hasan bin Sahal. Therefore, in the month of Rabia al-Awwal 201 A.H., Mansoor bin Mehdi took over Baghdad and Isa bin Mohammad bin Abi Khalid was appointed commander-in-chief.

Hasan bin Sahal steadied himself and then sent forces against Mansoor bin Mehdi and a chain of battles started. In Iraq there was an uproar and in Merv Mamoon Rasheed remained in the dark because Fadal bin Sahal had cut off all means of communicating information to him. During the battles between Mansoor bin Mehdi and Hasan bin Sahal, criminals had a chance to commit crimes with impunity. Looting, robbery, theft, rape and oppression were committed openly on a large scale. No one hesitated in committing a crime, when the corruption reached its zenith the noblemen of Baghdad who had grown sick of the lawless deeds in Baghdad nominated Khalid Madryush and Sahal bin Salamah to begin the work of calling to the good and forbidding evil by sermonizing the masses. Their joint efforts yielded results and the corruption was reduced considerably. However, Mansoor bin Mehdi and Isa bin Mohammad bin Abi Khalid apprehended rebellion from Sahal bin Salamah. At last Mansoor and Isa reconciled with Hasan bin Sahal on the condition that Hasan bin Sahal should have a pardon for them signed by caliph Mamoon and keep these two men as the rulers of Baghdad.

Hasan bin Sahal entered Baghdad, assigned them as rulers of Baghdad on his behalf and went back to Nahrwan. This took place in Ramadan in 201 A.H. While these incidents were taking place, in Merv in Ramadan, 201 A.H. Mamoon Rasheed was nominating Ali Rada bin Musa Kazim bin Jafar Sadiq his heir-apparent and was totally unaware of the events that were taking place in Baghdad.

### **The Succession of Imam Ali Rada**

Mamoon Rasheed was completely unaware of the affairs of state under Fadal bin Sahal who ran the government as he wanted. Mamoon didn't even know that he was living the life of a man under house arrest.

In 200 A.H., Mamoon called most of the members of the Abbasids to Merv and kept them as his guests for months although none of them merited selection as heir apparent. Finally, Fadal bin Sahal and other supporters of the Prophet's family drew his attention to Ali Rada bin Musa Kazim. The fact was that he was superior to all among the Banu Hashim in respect of his competence and qualification. Mamoon had his daughter married to Ali Rada without any hesitation and in Ramadan 201 A.H. he made Ali Rada bin Musa Kazim his heir-apparent and deposed his own brother Motamin who was made heir-apparent after Mamoon by Haroon Rasheed. Haroon had himself authorized Mamoon to remove Motamin and so Mamoon cannot be accused of deposing Motamin unlawfully. Following this Mamoon stopped wearing black clothes, which was the mark of the Abbasids and began to put on green clothes, which was the mark of the Alawiites. Then all the territories followed suit.

Mamoon then issued instructions to the governors, officials and soldiers to use green clothes instead of black ones throughout the entire realm. He sent orders to the governors to take the oath from the people for the succession of Ali Rada bin Musa Kazim. When that order was conveyed to the government officials through Fadal bin Sahal, some obeyed it with pleasure and some detested it. When Hasan bin Sahal sent that order to Isa bin Mohammad bin Abi Khalid and Mansoor bin Mehdi in Baghdad, it created a new uproar and the people were convinced that Fadal bin Sahal succeeded in taking the

caliphate away from the Abbasids and delivered it to the Alawiites. The Abbasids and their supporters could not tolerate it. They knew that Abu Muslim was the first who tried to take the caliphate away from the Abbasids and deliver it to the Alawiites and about another abortive attempt that was made by the Barmuk family. As the distinction between the Arabs and the non-Arabs became apparent, the general Arab masses considered Fadal bin Sahal to be their opponent and the patron of the non-Arabs. The Arab's understood Ali Rada's succession to be a victory for the non-Arabs and a defeat of the Arabs.

The Arabs dominated Baghdad and it was the central city of the Abbasids. The news created great unrest there and caused them to consult with one another on the issue. They had the recent experience of undergoing untold miseries during rebellion and disobedience and caution made them to decide that it was essential to learn the reaction of the other Islamic provinces and territories to the news of Ali Rada's succession before they considered action. The news reached Baghdad in Ramadan 201 A.H. and for three months, they did not take any steps. Meanwhile the movement to stop the caliphate from being taken away from the Abbasids and given to the Alawiites continued to gather strength.

### **Ibrahim bin Mehdi's Caliphate**

On 25 Dhul Hijjah 201 A.H., the Abbasids and their supporters chose Ibrahim bin Mehdi for the caliphate and took the oath for him secretly. On 1 Muharram 202 A.H., all of Baghdad took the oath openly and made him caliph and deposed Mamoon. As soon as Ibrahim assumed power, he promised the soldiers to pay them six months salary as a reward. He captured Kufa and Sawad and marched to Madain and was occupied in strengthening his army. He then deputed Abbas Bin Musa ruler of Baghdad and Ishaq bin Musa in the eastern territories.

On Hasan bin Sahal's side, Humaid bin Abdul Humaid was in Qasr Ibn Hubairah. He went to Hasan bin Sahal. Ibrahim bin Mehdi sent Isa bin Mohammad bin Abi Khalid to capture Qasr Ibn Hubairah and he captured it looting Humaid's military camp. Hasan bin Sahal gave a letter of governorship to Ali Rada's brother Abbas bin Musa Kazim and sent him to Kufa. He reached Kufa and made an announcement

saying, "My brother Ali Rada will succeed to the caliphate after Mamoon. Those of you who are the lovers of the Prophet's family should not recognize Ibrahim bin Mehdi as caliph and any action against Mamoon Rasheed's caliphate is not correct."

The Kufans recognized Abbas bin Musa Kazim's governorship and only the Shiites stayed unattached maintaining the position that they supported his brother Ali Rada but wanted nothing to do with Mamoon. Ibrahim bin Mehdi deputed his two generals Sayeed and Abul Bast to challenge Abbas bin Musa Kazim. Abbas sent his cousin Ali bin Mohammad bin Jafar to fight with him. The armies clashed, which resulted in the defeat of Ali bin Mohammad. Sayeed camped at Hirah and ordered the army to move on to Kufa. The Kufans and Abbas fought several battles and finally the Kufans and Abbas asked for safety and security. Abbas bin Musa Kazim came out of the house and the victorious army began to enter Kufa. In the meantime, Abbas's men felt enthused and emboldened and prepared to fight again. Sayeed's army defeated them again, occupied Kufa and imprisoned Abbas.

Hearing the news Sayeed left Hirah and came to Kufa and after making an inquiry if Abbas had violated the agreement after asking for safety and security released him. He had some killed for violation of the peace and after appointing a governor in Kufa went to Baghdad. Hasan bin Sahal sent Humaid bin Abdul Humaid to Kufa. The governor in Kufa fled without a fight. Ibrahim bin Mehdi sent Isa bin Mohammad bin Abi Khalid to Wasit to attack Hasan bin Sahal. Hasan bin Sahal defeated and forced Isa bin Mohammad to flee to Baghdad. In short, 202 A.H. passed and 203 A.H. began with these upheavals.

Ibrahim left no stone unturned in strengthening his caliphate in all possible ways. In the beginning of 203 A.H., Baghdad saw an upheaval, which put his caliphate and government in peril. Humaid bin Abdul Humaid made up his mind to go to Baghdad and fight with Ibrahim bin Mehdi after gaining control over Kufa. Ibrahim bin Mehdi's general was Isa bin Mohammad bin Abi Khalid.

Humaid conspired with Isa bin Mohammad bin Abi Khalid by sending to him messages surreptitiously therefore, he avoided and evaded a confrontation with Humaid. When Isa's brother Haroon bin

Mohammad found out about the conspiracy, he informed Ibrahim bin Mehdi. Ibrahim bin Mehdi called Isa to his court, humiliated him and threw him into prison. When the soldiers heard of his imprisonment, they became restless and Isa's deputy Abbas entered into a coalition with them and proposed the overthrow of Ibrahim bin Mehdi. Most of the inhabitants of Baghdad joined the coup and imprisoned Ibrahim's officials and agents. Then Abbas wrote to Humaid, "Come to Baghdad at once. I shall hand over Baghdad to you". Humaid arrived in Baghdad with his army and gained control over a part of the city. The other part was under the control of Ibrahim bin Mehdi. A few battles were fought in the city. Finally, becoming frustrated Ibrahim bin Mehdi went into hiding and the whole of the city fell under the control of Hasan bin Sahal's generals Humaid bin Abdul Humaid and Ali bin Hisham. Thus, the caliphate of Ibrahim bin Mehdi ended on 17 Dhul Hijjah 203 A.H.

### **The Death of Fadal bin Sahal**

It has been mentioned that whatever news Fadal bin Sahal wanted to communicate to Mamoon he passed it on and whatever he wished to conceal from him he withheld it. He therefore withheld from him the news of Ibrahim bin Mehdi's assuming power as caliph in Baghdad and none dared to acquaint Mamoon with the state of affairs in Iraq. Fadal had deputed Tahir bin Husain as the ruler of Riqqah. Tahir was a famous general whose services could have been utilized in putting an end to the unrest in Iraq but Fadal bin Sahal considered him to be like Harsimah. So, by appointing him governor of an ordinary state he had virtually paralyzed him.

In Iraq unrest continued to increase unabated and the masses began to hate Hasan bin Sahal even more. A few persons therefore gathered courage and ran the risk of undertaking the journey to Merv and called on Ali Rada bin Musa Kazim, the heir apparent to the caliphate, and said, "No one else dares to make Mamoon aware of the real state of affairs except you. So kindly settle this issue."

Although Ali Rada did not regard Fadal bin Sahal as his opponent and always looked at him as a supporter, it was the purity of his heart and intention that convinced him to do the job. He briefed Mamoon

Rasheed in detail about Fadal bin Sahal's and Hasan bin Sahal's improper activities, the murder of Harsimah, neutralizing the power of Tahir, the riot in Iraq and the caliphate of Ibrahim bin Mehdi and said, "The masses are getting sick and your caliphate is in danger." While informing him of all these details he also said to him clearly, "Because you have made me your heir apparent Banu Abbas and their supporters are displeased with you."

After hearing about all these matters Mamoon said to him, "Is anybody else aware of these things other than you?" He said, "Your chiefs and companions also know these things but they are paralyzed with fear of Fadal bin Sahal and they dare not tell you." Mamoon called those officers in private and inquired of them. They all declined to speak but when he assured them that Fadal would not harm them, they opened their mouths and told him everything and confirmed what Ali Rada had informed him. Hearing this he intended to leave Merv and go to Iraq. When Fadal came to know about the disclosures, he persecuted the leaders who had acquainted Mamoon with the real state of affairs. He imprisoned some of them and some were insulted and lashed but it was too late to change anything. Mamoon took the wise step that he did not let Fadal bin Sahal become afraid or frustrated. He made Fadal bin Sahal's cousin Ghassan bin Abbad the governor of Khorasan and left Khorasan and went to Iraq. He arrived at Sarkhas. There Fadal bin Sahal was attacked and killed by four persons in his bathroom. The killers escaped.

Mamoon announced that whosoever captured the killers would be given 10,000 dinars. They were duly arrested and killed by his orders. Their heads were sent to Hasan bin Sahal.

Mamoon wrote a consolatory letter to Hasan bin Sahal and made him his minister in Fadal bin Sahal's place. He then visited Fadal's mother to console her. He said to her, "Just as Fadal was your son, I am your son also." After a few days, he married Hasan bin Sahal's daughter Boran and thereby raised Hasan's prestige. In short, Fadal bin Sahal's murder took place in the same way in which Jafar Barmuk's murder had taken place. It goes without saying that it was Mamoon Rasheed who had him murdered and those four men who killed him in his bathroom were ordered by Mamoon Rasheed. Fadal had proved



himself deserving to be killed. In this respect, Mamoon followed his father Haroon Rasheed with the difference that the Haroon had Jafar Barmuk killed and then punished the entire Barmuk family and took the blame of his murder upon himself, while Mamoon had Fadal killed and bestowed so much favor on his family that no one could dare condemn or slander him or prove him guilty to such an extent that even Fadal's brother, father and mother did not complain. The murder took place at Sarkhas on 2 Shaban 202 A.H.

### **The Death of Imam Ali Rada bin Musa Kazim**

Caliph Mamoon' Rasheed had already had his daughter Umm Habib married to Ali Rada. During the journey to Iraq, he married his second daughter to Ali Rada's son Mohammad bin Ali Rada but the departure to her husband's house was deferred until she came of age some years later. Mamoon left Merv in Rajab 202 A.H. and reached Baghdad on 15 Safar 204 A.H. He covered the journey in one year and six months and came to Baghdad after halting at many places on the way. The journey fully acquainted him with the situation in the country and the people favorably responded to him upon his arrival in Baghdad. During the same journey, he sent Ali Rada's brother Ibrahim bin Musa Kazim as the leader of the pilgrimage and gave him the governorship of Yemen. He halted at Tus and came to his father's grave and prayed for him.

He stayed in Tus for over a month. What happened while they were there was that the heir apparent Imam Ali Rada died while eating grapes. Mamoon was extremely shocked about his death. He accompanied the funeral procession bare headed and said, "O Abul Hasan! Where should I go and what should I do after you?" For three days, he halted at the grave and lived on bread and salt. He had his father Haroon Rasheed's grave dug out and put Ali Rada's dead body into it so that Haroon Rasheed should be benefited from Ali Rada's grace. Mamoon Rasheed was dedicated to Ali Rada. The popular suspicion that it was Mamoon Rasheed who had his grapes poisoned seems to be totally baseless since he was not compelled to choose him as his heir apparent, which he did of his own accord. He married his daughters to Ali Rada and to his son willingly. He made Ali Rada's



brother governor of Yemen and leader of the pilgrimage. He could not have served a man so much whom he wanted to have killed. Furthermore, how could he put the body of a man he had killed into his father's grave? To have him buried in his father's grave is ample proof of his true and deep love for him, which was not tainted by hypocrisy or pretense. His deep mourning over his death also indicates this fact. Mamoon Rasheed always dealt kindly with the Alawiites during his caliphate and appointed them to high posts, which cannot be overlooked. All these sufficiently demonstrate that he did not hate the Alawiites. He wanted to improve their lot and help them. Had he removed Ali Rada by poison, he could not have continued to behave with them in the manner that he did. It is possible that Banu Abbas or one of their supporters poisoned his grapes because they were displeased with Mamoon Rasheed for making Ali Rada his heir-apparent. Imam Ali Rada died in Safar 203 A.H. when he was 55. He was born at Madinah.

### **Tahir bin Husain's Reappearance**

Tahir bin Husain bin Mus'ab bin Zuraiq bin Hamam has been mentioned above. His grandfather, Zuraiq was the slave of the famous Talha bin Obaidullah. Zuraiq's son Mus'ab bin Zuraiq was a clerk to Banu Abbas's Nageeb Sulaiman bin Kaseer and was eventually the Ameer of Herat.

Mus'ab's son Tahir bin Husain was born at Merv in 159 A.H. Fadal bin Sahal gave him the governorship of Riqqah and sent him to fight with Nasr bin Sheeth. Nasr bin Sheeth captured Halab and its eastern territories and set himself up as its ruler. Since Tahir did not get the expected and suitable reward following Ameen's death and the victory of Baghdad and since he did not get sufficient encouragement from Fadal bin Sahal, he lived at Riqqah and fought with Nasr bin Sheeth but without enthusiasm. Nasr announced that he did not want to obey Mamoon because he had preferred the non-Arabs to the Arabs. On this point, Tahir agreed with him. When Mamoon became aware of the real state of affairs and left for Baghdad, he wrote to Tahir asking to see him at Nahrwan before reaching Baghdad.

Mamoon left Tus and arrived at Jurjan. He stayed there for over a

month. Continuing in this way, he arrived in Nahrwan after stopping at several places. Tahir had also arrived there after making his nephew Ishaq bin Ibrahim his deputy in Riqqah, and in Nahrwan he met Mamoon. As he was approaching Baghdad, Ibrahim bin Mehdi's caliphate had met its end before he actually entered Baghdad and Ibrahim was in hiding there.

After leaving Nahrwan, Mamoon entered Baghdad on 15 Safar 204 A.H. He held court there and keeping in view Tahir's conquests and sacrifices, asked him to express his wish. Tahir said, "Please give up wearing green clothes and permit all others to wear the traditional black clothes and adopt the ways of the Abbasids." Mamoon agreed and acted accordingly. This met with popular appreciation all over Baghdad and Banu Abbas's grievances were redressed. This happened on 23 Safar 204 A.H.

### **Appointment of Governors and Important Events**

In the month of Safar 204 A.H., Mamoon Rasheed entered Baghdad and attended to improving his administration. He appointed Tahir bin Husain officer of the Police Department and City Magistrate of Baghdad, which were very important posts compared to the governorship of Jazirah and Sawad. The governorship of Kufa was given to his brother Abu Isa and that of Basra to another brother Saleh. Hijaz was given to Abdullah bin Husain bin Abbas bin Ali bin Abi Talib, Mousil to Syed bin Anas Azdi, Riqqah to Abdullah bin Tahir bin Husain, Jazirah to Yahya bin Ma'az and Armenia and Azerbaijan to Isa bin Mohammad bin Abi Khalid.

The same year saw the death of the governor of Egypt, Sirri bin Mohammad bin Hakam. After his death, his son Abdullah bin Sirri succeeded him. Dawood bin Yazid, the governor of Sindh, also died the same year. His place was taken over by Bishr bin Dawood on the condition that he would send yearly 10,000 dirhams to Mamoon as tax. The same year Hasan bin Sahal went mad and his condition deteriorated so much that he had to be physically confined. Mamoon appointed Ahmed bin Abi Khalid as his prime minister. There lived a group near the Persian Gulf known by the name Zutt, who numbered fifteen to twenty thousand. They committed highway robbery making

the road to Basra perilous. Mamoon instructed the governor of Jazirah, Yahya bin Ma'az, to punish them but they were not fully subdued.

### **Tahir the Governor of Khorasan**

Mamoon Rasheed deputed Isa bin Yazid Jaludi in charge of the expedition against the Zutt. In the same year, Tahir visited Mamoon on the occasion of a normal gathering. Seeing Tahir reminded Mamoon of his brother Ameen and tears rushed to his eyes. He was also reminded of Tahir's oppressive measures, which he had used in arresting, humiliating and killing Ameen. When Tahir asked him the reason of his tears, he said, "There is something which is humiliating if expressed and painful if concealed but who in the world is free from pain and sorrow. I also tolerate this pain."

Tahir did not say anything at the moment but later on he ordered one of Mamoon's courtiers Husain who was also present on the occasion to ask him the cause and sent him 100,000 dirhams through his clerk Mohammad bin Haroon as a reward. Finding an opportune moment, Husain asked Mamoon the reason tears were brought to his eyes. He, on condition of not revealing it to anyone, said, "My eyes were filled with tears to see Tahir on that particular day because I thought it was the same Tahir who humiliated and killed my brother Ameen and today he gives me so much respect." When Husain conveyed this information to Tahir, he was very worried and began to envision his own death assuming that Mamoon would certainly harm him one day. Keeping it in his heart he said to the Prime Minister Ahmad bin Abi Khalid, "I want to live away from Baghdad. Please send me as the governor of a province and I won't forget this service of yours."

When Mamoon set out to Baghdad from Khorasan, he had made Ghassan bin Abbad the governor of Khorasan. Ahmad bin Abi Khalid went to Mamoon and said to him, "The thought of Ghassan bin Abbad and Khorasan did not allow me to have a wink of sleep last night because news is coming from the border that the Turks (Mongols) are going to rebel soon. If this happens, Ghassan bin Abbad won't be able to save Khorasan. A more able and experienced man is needed there." Mamoon said, "Yes, it is a matter of great concern. Can you tell me who should be sent there?" Ahmad bin Abi Khalid said, "I don't see

anybody better than Tahir bin Husain." Mamoon said, "Tahir bin Husain may also rebel." Ahmad bin Abi Khalid said, "I stand surety on behalf of Tahir. He won't rebel."

Mamoon sent for Tahir and made him the ruler of all the provinces of the east from Baghdad to Khorasan up to Sindh, Balkh and Bukhara and sent him off to the capital of Khorasan, Merv. His son Abdullah was appointed the city magistrate and chief of police in Baghdad. Tahir was given 1,000,000 dirhams plus a slave as a reward at the time of departure. Mamoon said to him, "This is the reward for your excellent service." Mamoon had briefed the slave that if he saw Tahir bent upon rebellion he should remove him with poison. Tahir left Baghdad at the end of Dhul Qada 205 A.H. and went to Khorasan.

### **Abdullah bin Tahir's Governorship**

The news reached in 206 A.H. that Yahya bin Mu'az, the governor of Jazirah, and Sirri bin Mohammad Hakam, the governor of Egypt, died and they made their sons Ahmad and Obaidallah the governors of Jazirah and Egypt respectively. Nasr bin Sheeth began to advance towards Jazirah and Obaidallah raised the flag of rebellion in Egypt. Mamoon appointed Ishaq bin Ibrahim bin Husain bin Mus'ab officer to the Police Department in place of Obaidallah. Then he appointed Abdullah bin Tahir, governor of Jazirah and sent him off with the instructions first to fight Nasr bin Sheeth and after completing this, send the forces to Egypt.

Abdullah bin Tahir at once left with the military forces, halted in between Riqqah and Egypt and spread out groups of his soldiers to besiege Nasr bin Sheeth. When Tahir bin Husain received the news in Khorasan that the Caliph had made Abdullah governor of Jazirah and in charge of all the western provinces, he wrote a letter to Abdullah, which contained his views on the principles of administration, grand ethics and politics. Historically, it is considered to be one of the best documents on ethics and the principles of administration.

Mamoon learned about it, had it copied and sent a copy to each of his governors. Imam Ibn Khaldoon in his book *A Preface to History* and Ibn Atheer in his book *A Complete History* have recorded it. It is considered

essential to include it in the study of ethics. The same year Fadal bin Rabi who went into hiding for fear of Mamoon and then eventually went to Ibrahim bin Mehdi and joined his companionship and hid himself when Ibrahim went underground, begged for forgiveness and Mamoon forgave him.

A series of battles continued to be fought between Abdullah bin Tahir and Nasr bin Sheeth and due to this disturbance no expedition could be sent to Egypt. Abdur Rahman bin Ahmad became an insurgent in Yemen but he was defeated in the same year. Mamoon sent Dinar bin Abdullah to Yemen, Abdur Rahman bin Ahmad requested Dinar to grant him security and pardon and left Yemen for Baghdad and Yemen came under the control of Dinar bin Abdullah.

### **The Death of Tahir bin Husain the Governor of Khorasan**

Having arrived in Khorasan, he easily succeeded in establishing his government and authority and he put an end to all the disturbances there. It is a fact that he was the best choice for the governorship of Khorasan. As mentioned above, Tahir was not satisfied with Mamoon. He could have possibly avoided Mamoon and captured a vast territory in order to protect him from coming into his grip. He had seen the end of Fadal bin Sahal and the Barmuks and had read about Abu Muslim Khorasani. He also knew Mamoon's view about him, which he had gathered from Husain Nadeem. In brief in Jumad-al-Thani 207 A.H., Tahir made a sermon on Friday at the Central Mosque in which he neither named Caliph Mamoon Rasheed nor did he offer prayers for him. He simply prayed for the correction of the community and stepped down from the pulpit.

Kulthum bin Thabit, an agent of the caliph was present there and he at once sent the information to Mamoon in Baghdad. When Mamoon read the report, he sent for the Prime Minister, informed him of the events and instructed him to leave with the army for Khorasan without any delay. He said to him, "As you stand surety, you should go to Khorasan and save it from his mischief and bring back Tahir as a captive." Ahmad bin Abi Khalid prepared for departure. The next day another report arrived that Tahir had fallen ill on Friday and suddenly

died on Saturday. The slave who was given to Tahir on the occasion of his appointment to the rank of governor probably poisoned him when he found out Tahir's negative intention about Mamoon.

Upon hearing the news of Tahir's death, Mamoon Rasheed said, "All praise is due to Allah who caused his death before mine." Then he made his son Talha bin Tahir governor of Khorasan and sent Ahmad bin Abi Khalid to Khorasan to establish Talha bin Tahir firmly there so that there might not be any possibility of rebellion and disobedience there. It was a trademark of Mamoon that he would penalize a rebel or revolutionary and nothing ever stopped him from destroying him but he never harmed the guilty party's family and relatives. He usually would endear himself to them even more by serving them. Ahmad bin Abi Khalid went to Khorasan and Mawaraunnahr and punished the insurgents. When he was informed that Tahir's brother Husain bin Husain bin Mus'ab rebelled in Kerman he went there, arrested him and presented him to Mamoon. Mamoon excused him. When Ahmad bin Abi Khalid was returning from Khorasan to the capital Baghdad, Talha bin Tahir presented to him 3,000,000 dirhams in cash and goods worth 100,000 dirhams as gift. He gave Ahmed's clerk 500,000 dirhams.

The same year Mamoon removed Isa bin Yazid Jaludi and assigned Dawood bin Manjoor commander of the expedition to Zutt and put the territories of Basra, Dajlah, Yamama and Bahrain under his control. He made Mohammad bin Hafiz the ruler of Tabristan. The same year the tribe of Banu Shaiban revolted against Mamoon. Mamoon sent Syed bin Anas to punish and discipline them. The clash with Banu Shaiban took place at Waskarah and they were defeated.

The same year Mamoon Rasheed sent Mohammad bin Jafar Amri as ambassador to Nasr bin Sheeth who had been continuously suffering defeat at the hands of Abdullah bin Tahir, who persuaded him to obey. Nasr bin Sheeth said, "I am ready to reconcile with Mamoon Rasheed provided I should not be forced to go to his court." He came to Mamoon and conveyed Nasr's condition. Mamoon swore that he would not rest until he forced Nasr to present himself in his court. Nasr said to his companions who were all Arabs, "How can Mamoon Rasheed, who failed to subdue the toads of the Zutt community, get the better of us?" He then geared up to give him a tougher fight than before.

## **The Insurrection in Africa**

North Africa, this province included central Tunis and Qairwan situated between Egypt and Morocco, was given to Ibrahim bin Aghlab in 184 A.H. on lease for 40,000 dinars as tax annually during Haroon Rasheed's regime. He ruled over Africa very efficiently. In Mamoon Rasheed's regime the ruler of North Africa was Ibrahim's son Zeyadatullah bin Ibrahim bin Aghlab. In 208 A.H., there was a revolt in Tunis, which was engineered by Mansoor bin Naseer. Mansoor bin Naseer captured most parts of Tunis and besieged Zeyadatullah in the capital Qairwan. Zeyadatullah defeated and forced Mansoor bin Naseer to flee but Mansoor rallied his forces again and came to fight and the tug of war continued from 208 A.H. to 211 A.H. At last, Mansoor bin Naseer was killed by one of his own men and Zeyadatullah ruled over Africa easily.

## **The End of Nasr bin Sheeth's Rebellion**

Nasr bin Sheeth's situation has been related above. He loved and befriended Ameen bin Haroon. He prepared himself to revolt when he heard of Ameen's murder and seeing the subjugation of the Arab elements and the domination of the non-Arabs over the Islamic caliphate. He had no sympathy with the Alawites and his opposition and hatred of the non-Arabs compelled him to fight with Mamoon. Before Abdullah bin Tahir, Tahir bin Husain had waged a low-key war with him. He prolonged the battle and remained safe which earned him great popularity and a reputation for valor caused him to have a meteoric rise in status. He had occupied almost all the regions of the province Jazirah and lived at Kaisoom to the north of Halab. At last, in 209 A.H. Abdullah bin Tahir encircled him from all sides and besieged him there. Being compelled by the severity of the siege and his helplessness he surrendered to Abdullah bin Tahir unconditionally. He sent him to Mamoon in Baghdad who put him under surveillance in Mansoor City.

## **The Murder of Ibn Ayesha and the Arrest of Ibrahim**

Ibrahim bin Mohammad bin Abdul Wahab bin Ibrahim Imam bin Mohammad bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib alias Ibn Ayesha took the oath for the caliphate at the hands of Ibrahim bin Mehdi. When Ibrahim bin Mehdi went into hiding, Ibn Ayesha followed suit. Ibrahim bin Aghlab and Malik bin Shaheen accompanied them. When Abdullah bin Tahir caught Nasr bin Sheeth and sent him to Baghdad, spies informed Mamoon that the day Nasr bin Sheeth entered Baghdad, Ibn Ayesha, Ibrahim bin Aghlab and Malik bin Shaheen would revolt and create chaos. Mamoon had prior information about their hiding in Baghdad and trying to win over people to become accomplices in the conspiracy.

Upon receiving this news, the Baghdad police department was ordered to arrest the ringleaders of the conspiracy at any cost. The Police succeeded and three of the leaders except Ibrahim bin Mehdi were taken into custody and put in jail. They tried to break out and escape. When Mamoon was informed, he went to the jail. He had them executed. Ibn Ayesha was the first Abbasid who was executed by Mamoon. This happened in the month of Safar 210 A.H. After a short time Ibrahim bin Mehdi was arrested while traveling in the guise of a woman. He was presented in the court with the same female clothes on.

Mamoon counseled with the people present in the court. They advised him to execute Ibrahim but Mamoon's Prime Minister Ahmad bin Abi Khalid said, "Please forgive him and pardon his rebellion." Mamoon forgave him and Ibrahim bin Mehdi recited verses in praise of Mamoon and Mamoon treated him with honor and love. This took place in Rabi-al-Awwal 210 A.H.

## **Revolt in Egypt and Alexandria**

It has been recorded above that the governor of Egypt, Sirri bin Mohammad bin Hakam had nominated his son Obaidullah as his heir-apparent at the time of his death. Immediately after assuming power Obaidullah revolted. Busy fighting Nasr bin Sheeth, Abdullah bin Tahir was not able to pay attention to Egypt and Mamoon because



of disturbances on other fronts could not send another expedition to Egypt. A great part of the province of Egypt went out of the control of his government. It is said that Imam Malik bin Anas's followers who lived in Cordova, the capital of Andulus (Muslim Spain), entered into a conspiracy against the Ummayah Caliph Hakam bin Hisham. At the last minute, the caliph received information about the plot and destroyed and demolished the western part of the city of Cordova where the conspiracy was centered.

He arrested the followers of Imam Malik and punished and expelled them from Spain. One group settled in Morocco and another went to Egypt and entered Alexandria by boat. After a short time, the newly arrived Malikis revolted against Obaidullah's ruler. They expelled the ruler from Alexandria, captured it and its surrounding territories and made Abu Hafs Omar Baluti their Ameer. At this time Abdullah bin Tahir was at war with Nasr bin Sheeth.

Obaidullah bin Sirri was not able to recapture the territory from the Malikis. When Abdullah bin Tahir was free from fighting Nasr bin Sheeth, he turned his attention to Egypt. Obaidullah bin Sirri fought but Abdullah bin Tahir, defeated and surrounded him. Compelled by the siege Obaidullah requested security and pardon and laid down arms and surrendered himself to Abdullah. Abdullah then went to Alexandria. Abu Hafs Omar Baluti was powerless and requested security and pardon. Abdullah bin Tahir agreed on the condition that Abu Hafs and his group should leave Alexandria and Egypt and go to an island in the Roman Sea (Roman part of the Mediterranean Sea).

Omar, along with his men, boarded the ships and went to Crete and captured it and they settled there permanently and established their rule there. This took place in 210 A.H. For the next 160 years the dynasty of Abu Hafs Omar Baluti ruled over Crete. Finally, Armetius, Constantine's son, took the island from the last ruler of the Abu Hafs dynasty, Abdul Aziz and annexed it to Greece.

### **Zuraiq and Bâbak Khurmîc**

Zuraiq, whose real name was Ali bin Sadqah, was an Arab. He was made governor of Armenia and Azerbaijan in 209 A.H. by Caliph Mamoon Rasheed. He collected 40,000 men and declared his

independence and revolted against Mamoon.

Mamoon sent Ibrahim bin Laith bin Fadal to Azerbaijan. A new religion had been spreading since the time of Haroon Rasheed in northern Persia near the border of Azerbaijan, Jawedan, a Zoroastrian, had founded this new religion. It professed murder, bloodshed and adultery as lawful. It resembled the Mazdki religion. When Jawedan died, his disciple Bâbak Khurmi took possession of his wife and became the head of his teacher's followers. During his regime, they continued to grow in power and their number increased considerably. Their constant plundering and looting put an end to peace in the provinces there.

They began to challenge the government forces in 201 A.H. Several times the governors suffered defeat and that quickened the rise of Babak's power and influence considerably. In 209 A.H., Bâbak captured the governor of Azerbaijan following which, Zuraiq was sent there as governor.

Following Zuraiq's revolt in 211 A.H. there appeared two enemies instead of one. Mamoon Rasheed ordered the governor of Mousil, Syed bin Anas to fight against him. He attacked Zuraiq with a big army but was killed and his soldiers escaped fleeing. Mamoon was shocked to hear this. At the end of 211 A.H., he appointed Mohammad bin Humaid Toosi, governor of Mousil and ordered him to punish Zuraiq and Bâbak both. Zuraiq had occupied Mousil before Mohammad bin Humaid Toosi left Baghdad with his army. They fought near Mousil, Zuraiq lost and fled and Mohammad bin Humaid entered Mousil as the victor.

He then recruited Arabs into his army, put his army and equipment in order and marched towards Zuraiq. They clashed at the Zab River. Zuraiq was defeated again and had to bear the humiliation of capture and imprisonment. Mohammad bin Humaid went ahead removed all his administrators and workers and put the whole province of Azerbaijan under his own control. Then he decided to deal with Bâbak Khurmi. Several battles were fought and Khurmi was pushed back to the mountains. Khurmi and his forces climbed upon the mountain. Mohammad bin Humaid followed them. Khurmi turned back and

attacked and defeated Mohammad bin Humaid. Khurmi's men came out of their hiding places and began a general massacre. During this fight, Mohammad bin Humaid was killed. This victory encouraged Bâbak Khurmi even more. This event took place in 212 A.H.

The same year Musa bin Hafs the governor of Tabristan died and Mamoon appointed Musa's son in his place. Then he sent Hajib bin Saleh to Sindh as its governor. The previous governor Bishr bin Dawood refused to hand over the authority. A fight ensued and Bishr lost and fled to Kerman.

The same year Mamoon recalled Abdullah bin Tahir from Egypt and ordered him to finish the insurrection of Bâbak Khurmi. He wanted to march to Babak Khurmi and marshal his troops in battle array at Dinoor however, he received news that the Khwarij had revolted in Nishapur following the death of Talha bin Tahir, the governor of Khorasan. Mamoon immediately sent a letter to Talha's brother Abdullah bin Tahir appointing him governor of Khorasan and ordered him to put down the revolt of the Khwarij. Abdullah bin Tahir left Dinoor and turned to Nishapur. Bâbak Khurmi therefore remained safe from Abdullah bin Tahir. No other general was assigned to fight him. His mischief met its end following the death of Mamoon. Abdullah bin Tahir arrived in Khorasan and succeeded in putting down the rebellion of the Khwarij.

### **Miscellaneous Events**

Mamoon Rasheed's Prime Minister Ahmad bin Abi Khalid was very wise, noble-hearted and good-natured, died the same year, 212 A.H. Mamoon appointed Ahmad bin Yusuf in his place. Ahmad bin Abi Khalid was a Syrian slave of Bani Amir he was a talented author and administrator.

Ahmad bin Yusuf was a scribe in an undistinguished office. As Mamoon knew his merit, he appointed him the post of prime minister. In 212 A.H., Ahmad bin Muhammad Omari alias Ahmar al-Ain (Red Eye) revolted in Yemen. Caliph Mamoon deputed Mohammad bin Abdul Humaid popularly known as Abur Râzi in Yemen. In 213 A.H., Mamoon deputed his own son Abbas in Jazirah, Thagoor and Awasim

and his own brother Abu Ishaq Motasim in Syria and Egypt. Abu Ishaq on his own behalf sent Ibn Omairah Baz Isa as the ruler of Egypt. In 214 A.H., groups of the Qais and Yemenia tribes created chaos and wanted to kill Ibn Omairah and revolted. Motasim himself went to Egypt, subdued the insurgents and appointed administrators and peace was restored there.

In 213 A.H., Mamoon appointed Ghassan bin Abbas the governor of Sindh. The same year saw the death of Abur Râzi, the governor of Yemen, at the hands of rebels. Having been compelled Mamoon gave the state of Yemen to Mohammad bin Ibrahim Ziyadi who descended from Zeyad bin Abi Sufyan. He went there, founded the city of Zubaid, he made it his headquarter and began to rule over Yemen. He used to send presents and gifts to the Caliph and read his name in the sermon. He governed independently until his death in 245 A.H. After him, his descendents and slaves ruled there until 533 A.H.

In 214 A.H., Mamoon made Ali bin Hisham the governor of Jabal, Qum, Isfahan and Azerbaijan. In 214 A.H., Abu Bilal Sabi Shâri revolted. Mamoon sent his son Abbas to punish and discipline him. Abu Bilal was killed in the fighting and the malevolence ended. In 215 A.H., the Emperor Michael died and his son Nofil succeeded him. When he noticed signs of disobedience and enmity from the Romans, Mamoon assigned Ishaq bin Ibrahim bin Mus'ab to the governorship of Sawâd, Halwân and Euphrates, left a deputy in Baghdad and he invaded the Romans. He passed through Mousil, Antakia, Masisa and Tartoos and entered Roman territory. He captured the fort of Qarah and pulled down its fortifications. Then he sent Ashnas to the fort of Sundus, and Ajeef and Jafar to the fort of Sanan with a division of the army and these two forts were captured. Abbas bin Mamoon Rasheed conquered the city of Maltiah. Motasim, who lived in Egypt, returned and called on Mamoon. The Romans were humbled and begged to be forgiven. Caliph Mamoon returned and went to Damascus. He was still on the way when the Romans rallied their forces and suddenly invaded Tartoos and Masisa. The civilians of the two cities were off their guards thinking that the Romans had reconciled with the Muslims and they were massacred mercilessly. As soon as Mamoon heard this news, he retraced his steps causing fear in the Roman

territories. The Islamic Army began to conquer fort after fort and city after city. Caliph Mamoon continued to advance after conquering many forts and territories and Motasim attacked and captured thirty forts. On another flank, Yahya bin Aksam was busy conquering cities and captured many Roman soldiers. Finally, the Roman emperor begged to be excused for his impertinence. Caliph Mamoon then ordered the army to return. He returned to Damascus and then turned his attention to Egypt. He punished the rebels severely and put things in order there. He left Egypt and went to Syria. He took one year for this invasion and the return journey.

In 217 A.H., the Romans became involved in some rebellious activities and Mamoon had to attack them again. Several battles were waged and eventually Nofil, the Roman Emperor, again begged for reconciliation. Mamoon again forgave him and then he returned from the Roman territory. In 218 A.H., he had to punish and discipline the Romans again. On his return, he ordered his son Abbas to build the city of Tawana as a memorial. He constructed a fort one-mile square. He had fortifications eight miles in circumference built and populated the city with people from different cities.

### **Mamoon's Death**

On the return from the Roman territories, Mamoon halted at Baznadoon River, near Riqqah. He came down with a fever on 13 Jumad-al-Thani 218 A.H. and died on Thursday 18 Rajab 218 A.H.

Before his death, he assembled the noblemen, officials, scholars and legal experts he made his will and gave instructions regarding his burial. He forbade them and others to weep noisily after his death. He called his brother Abu Ishaq Motasim, whom he had made his heir apparent, advised him and drew his attention to the principles of running an administration. He continued to recite Qur'anic verses. At the end he was heard saying, "O! You whose kingdom is eternal take pity on him whose kingdom is decaying" after which, he breathed his last. His brother Abu Ishaq Motasim and his son Abbas brought him from Riqqah to Tartos and buried him there. He was 48 and he ruled for 20 years and six months.

His entire regime was passed in fighting battles and putting down rebellions. He left the expedition of Zutt and Bâbak Khurmi incomplete both of these problems could not be suppressed and resolved during his caliphate. The era of his conquests against the Romans had just begun when he was overtaken by death. At the end of his life, he gave proof of his ability as a valiant general. He fought against the Romans over several years continuously and he died in a state of war on the battlefield.

### **Independence of Provinces and Countries**

While the caliphs of Banu Umayyah were in power, Damascus was the center and capital of the entire Islamic world. The Abbasids inherited the caliphate of Banu Umayyah and Abdullah Saffah the first Abbasid caliph in 132 A.H. became the inheritor of Banu Umayyah and the ruler of the entire Islamic world. However, in a short span of six years, from 138 A.H. Andulus was taken away from the control of the Abbasids and a separate caliphate of Banu Umayyah was established there. 172 A.H. another independent territory was established in Morocco, which came to be known as the sultanate of the Idrisids and Morocco left the jurisdiction of the Abbasids forever. In 184 A.H., the territories of Tunis and Algeria, called the province of North Africa, remained under the control of Banu Abbas in name only. An independent kingdom was established by Ibrahim bin Aghlab, which continued to exist for long years. In 205 A.H., Mamoon Rasheed fixed Tahir bin Husain as the Governor of Khorasan and Tahir's family ruled over Khorasan from that time. North Africa was nominally under the Abbasid rule, similarly Khorasan under Tahir's rule was only nominally under the Abbasids and only a small amount of taxes were paid to the caliph. The name of the Abbasid caliph was read at the Friday sermons but in the remaining affairs, Tahir and his descendants were quite independent.

In 213 A.H., Mohammad bin Ibrahim Zeyadi was given the governorship of Yemen and this kingdom remained with his family for a long years. Yemen became technically free like Khorasan and North Africa. In brief, between 138 A.H. and 213 A.H. a span of 75 years, five independent states were established. The Umayyachs in

Andulus, the Idrisids in Morocco, the Aghlabs in North Africa, Tahir and his descendants in Khorasan and the Zeyadis in Yemen all established independent states.

### **Academic Developments**

Mamoon Rasheed's regime was constantly involved in betrayal and rebellion and he remained busy maintaining order in the administration of the territories and provinces and punishing insurgents. It is beyond expectation that a man who had to constantly monitor the situation and the latest developments in his caliphate, could have paid attention to the acquisition of knowledge and the development of the arts. It is surprising that during his administration the sciences and arts developed greatly. Mamoon achieved many remarkable feats in the field of learning he patronized scholarship in an unprecedented manner exceeding that of any other age. That is why his fame is so enduring. Haroon Rasheed founded in Baghdad the institute of Translation and the institute of Compilation called the House of Wisdom, where educated of different foreign countries, followers of different religions and scholars of various languages were always found at work.

Mamoon was interested in having Aristotle's works translated. He wrote to the Roman Emperor requesting him to send all of Aristotle's works available with him. The Emperor hesitated. He consulted his Christian scholars. They said to him, "The books on philosophy are under lock and key in our country and none is allowed to read and teach them because they expel respect for religion from the people's hearts. We must send these books to the Caliph of Islam so that the publicity of philosophy will dampen the religious spirit of the Muslims." The Emperor had five camels loaded with these books and sent them to Mamoon Rasheed. Mamoon assigned the work of translation to Ishaq bin Kindi. He then sent his Christian scholars, under his employment, to Rome and Greece to search and bring books of science and the arts to him. A Christian scholar named Costa bin Luka went to Rome of his own accord and brought many books from there. Mamoon appointed him in the institute of Translation. In a similar manner, he employed Zoroastrian scholars with high salaries and entrusted them with the translation of the sciences and arts of that

civilization, when Indian kings knew the intererts of Mamoon they sent Sanskrit scholars of repute to him as a gift to please him. The translators at the institute of Translation received salaries up to 2,500 and these scholars numbered in the hundreds. Famous among them are Yaqub Kindi, Hunain bin Ishaq, Costa bin Luka Balbakki, Abu Jafar Yahya bin Adi, and Jibrail bin Bakhtishu. Besides salaries, the translators used to receive gold or silver equal to the weight of the books they translated. The books brought from Palestine, Egypt, Alexandria, Sicily, Rome, Iran and India were translated into Arabic. Most of the translators themselves authored books on sciences and arts. Some meritorious translators were deputed for correction and revision of previous translations.

It was during Mamoon Rasheed's regime that a famous scholar Muhammad bin Musa Khwarzarni wrote a book on Algebra in a competition sponsored by Mamoon in which he formulated the principles of Algebra and till this age those principle were not brokend not amended. When the study of the Greek books revealed to him that the earth was round, he called the scholars of Geography and Astronomy and ordered them to measure the circumference of the earth by selecting a vast and level field and measuring one degree of it. The level field of Sanjar was chosen. At a point an angle was formed with the height of the North Pole and then measuring with a surveyor's measuring chain they moved straight towards the north. When they had gone  $69 \frac{2}{3}$  miles to the North, one degree had increased in the angle of the height of the North Pole. Therefore, if a distance of one degree on the surface of the earth is  $69 \frac{2}{3}$  miles, the circumference of the whole earth should be approximately 25,000 miles. 360 degrees multiplied by  $69 \frac{2}{3}$  miles is approximately 25,000 miles. When the experiment was repeated on the plains of Kufa, the same results were arrived at.

[Editors note: The actual circumference of the earth is 24,902 miles. It makes an interesting footnote since this event took place more than 650 years before the time of Columbus.]

He had an observatory built at Shamsiyah by Khalid bin Abdul Malik Marwrozi and Yahya bin Mansoor, and appointed scholars of Astronomy to study the heavenly bodies. He called scholars and those



who were enlightened from all areas of the caliphate by order. He held academic seminars and symposia and participated in them in person. Scholars of literature, poets, orators, doctors, in short, the leaders in all fields the like of whom one could have hardly found in the whole world at that time, were present in Baghdad. Asmai was the most eminent scholar of Arabic compilation, syntax and literature could not leave Kufa due to old age. His salary was sent to him there. Important problems were sent to him in Kufa for solution. Farra Nahwi collected and compiled the *Science of Syntax* with many books written on this subject. A separate room in the royal palace was vacated and reserved for him. Scholars used to come to be benefited as his students. It was during Mamoon's regime that books on calligraphy were written and its principles and rules were collected, classified and set in order. In brief, it was due to Mamoon's patronage of learning that the Muslims were fully exposed to the sciences and arts of Greece, Iran, Egypt and India all in one place, the city of Baghdad.

Although the Muslims needed no other sciences and arts in the presence of the Qur'an and Hadith, they turned to the ancient philosophers and the physical sciences and systemized them as if they were newly formulated. They worked with absolute freedom. Although these foreign sciences and philosophies clashed with the Qur'an at times, the servants of Islam had the opportunity to prove these philosophies and principles wrong. A chain of clashes between religion and science began. The academic superiority that Islam achieved surpassed the conquests of territory achieved during the dynasty of Banu Umayyah. These academic conquests elevated the status of the caliphate of the Abbasids to be on par with Banu Umayyah. However, from the standpoint of worldly conquests the caliphate of the Abbasids can never be equal to the caliphate of Banu Umayyah. On the contrary, if we evaluate on the basis of worldly conquests the caliphate of Banu Abbas totally failed because it was not able to hold all the territory it acquired from Banu Umayyah.

### **Rebuttal of a Charge**

In some history books it was recorded wrongly that Mamoon Rasheed Abbasi invaded an Indian king of Rajputana named Bapa Rawal 22 times and every time he was defeated and chased away by Bapa

Rawal. It is said that the same distortion has also been recorded in some other books used in the Indian school system. Those who read in their youth that Mamoon was defeated 22 times by Bapa, automatically have a low image about Mamoon who, in order to subdue an ordinary feudal lord, had to use all his might throughout the long period of his Caliphate in vain. In the above pages, the conditions of Mamoon Rasheed Abbasi's regime have been recorded including the activities he was engaged in before he became Caliph. After becoming the ruler of Khorasan, he lived in Merv. It was at that time that Haroon Rasheed died at Tus. After that, Mamoon remained in Tus six years and did not leave. It is correct that his armies put down the rebellion in Kandahâr and Kabul and Islam came to be accepted in that territory by 200 A.H.

During that period, the king of Tibet embraced Islam and sent his images of gold and silver to Caliph Mamoon Rasheed at Merv. Sind was a part of his Caliphate and the governors, appointed by the Caliph's court, ruled there. However, Mamoon never went there in person. He left Merv and went to Baghdad. The details of that journey are recorded in historical documents. However, there is no mention of his journey to Sind or his invasion of India. After arriving in Baghdad, he lived there for a long period. At the end of his life, he left Baghdad to launch attacks on Roman territory. He also went to Syria and Egypt.

While he was returning from the campaigns against the Romans, he died. It defies reason to find the period in which to record his supposed attacks on India. It is possible that some governor of Sind might have sent a division of an army to Rajputana to discipline and punish some feudal Lord. But it probably was such an insignificant expedition that it was not recorded in the historical documentation. If it is said the governor of Sind sent an army, which was defeated by Bapa and the Muslims did not record it to preserve their reputation. Such an objection exposes the objector's dishonesty for he justifies falsehood in the recording of history, in all other cases the Muslim historians never concealed the defeats of Mamoon's armies and the many failures of his generals. While mentioning the plundering by the Zutt, they have mentioned Nasr bin Sheeth's taunt that Mamoon could not even defeat the few toads of Zutt. The historians, who

supposedly committed the crime of distorting facts to favor him, could have easily deleted the Zutt incident because after a short time, that community was totally wiped off the surface of the earth by the Romans and the incident could have remained hidden. However, this baseless lie was fabricated to extol Bapa's valor. This is the same kind of joking lie that the Hindu historians have stated about Vikramaditya, without any shame that he went to Italy and defeated the Roman emperor Julius Caesar in Rome. This is probably a reply to Alexander's invasion of India where they harmlessly even the historical score with their fabrication. Such light talk may provide a momentary pleasure at village meetings but it is not the recording of history.

### **Nature and Habits**

In respect to prudence, determination, tolerance, scholarship and valor Caliph Mamoon Rasheed was superior to all amongst the Banu Abbas dynasty. He used to say, "Amir Muawiya ❖ needed Amr bin Aas and Abdul Malik needed Hajjaj but I needed no one." He had a predilection to the Shi'ite way he felt that the Alawites deserved respect and the Caliphate more than all others. That was why he removed his brother Motamin and made Ali Raza his successor and had his daughter married to him. He had a mind to vacate his Caliphate and install him as Caliph in his own presence. However, after the passage of ten years and during the last period of his Caliphate he changed his mind following the betrayal and rebellion of the Alawites. He also wanted to issue instructions that none should remember Amir Muawiya ❖ with respect and he should be declared a wrong doer but he did not do so at the instance of the people.

He was also very fond of reading the Qur'an. During some Ramadan, he finished the Qur'an once everyday. When he made Ali Raza his heir-apparent, a few from among Banu Abbas said to him, "Please don't hand over the Caliphate to the Alawites." Mamoon said, "During his regime Ali bin Abi Talib ❖ had deputed Banu Abbas to govern most of the provinces. I want to reciprocate and give power and the Caliphate to their descendants."

When Mamoon provided an opportunity to the followers of all faiths and religions to give vent to their opinions openly at *Darul Munazirah*,

the institution that he created to allow free exchange of thought, academic discussions began to take place in an unrestrained way. Hair splitting and sophistic techniques more dedicated to debate than the seeking of truth evolved. The points of debate, which had little to do with the science of the religion, produced antagonistic parties over frivolous philosophies. Mamoon was drawn into these debates and became a participant in this competition. These unrestrained religious debates resulted in the creation of unnecessary and insignificant problems. There was a debate about the creation of the Qur'an. Mamoon was convinced by the school of thought that maintained that the Quran was created and he began to perpetrate atrocities on those who did not agree with him. The consequence of that pressure and oppression was disastrous. The scholars of the opposite points of view began to oppose him more vehemently and that generated even more rigid antagonism and prejudice to the extent that even after his death some scholars of Islam have been greatly agonized on account of this unreal and unnecessary problem.

Abu Muhammad Yazidi says that he used to teach Mamoon in his childhood. Once the servants complained to him saying, "When you go away, he beats the servants and behaves wantonly with them." Yazidi struck him with his stick seven times. Mamoon was weeping and wiping his eyes when the Prime Minister Jafar Barmuk appeared while Yazidi left. Jafar talked to Mamoon until he laughed and then left. Yazidi came back to him and said, "I was fearing that you would complain to Jafar." Mamoon said, "Leave Jafar I can not complain to my father for you had beaten me for my benefit." Yahya bin Aksam says: "One day I was sleeping in Mamoon Rasheed's room, Mamoon was also asleep. He awakened me saying, 'Please see if there is something near my feet?' I looked but found nothing but he was not satisfied. He called the servants. They lighted a lamp and saw that a snake was sitting under his bed. I said to him, 'you possess the knowledge of the unseen along with your other merits.' He said I seek refuge in Allah! What are you saying?' The fact is that I just had a dream in which somebody warned me against the danger of a naked sword. I at once woke up and I felt that some ugly incident would take place very soon. The bed was the nearest thing. So I looked into it and the snake was found."

Mohammad bin Mansoor says: "Mamoon used to say that 'a noble man is he who bears the atrocities perpetrated against him by his superior and does not persecute him who is inferior to him.'" Sayeed bin Muslim says: "Mamoon once said, 'If the criminals come to know how much I love forgiveness, their fear will vanish and their hearts will be filled with joy.'"

Mamoon said to a criminal, "By Allah, I shall slay you." He said, "Please be tolerant for softness is half of forgiveness." Mamoon said, "Now I have sworn an oath." He said, "If you go to Allāh as a violator of an oath, it is better than to go to Him as a killer." Mamoon forgave him. Abdus Salam bin Salah says: "One day I was sleeping in Mamoon's room. The lamp was going out. He found that his servant was asleep. Mamoon left the bed, set the wick right and went back to sleep." In another incident Mamoon would say, "Often it happens that I am in the bathroom and the servants abuse and accuse me. They think that I have not heard them but I hear and forgive them and never let them know that I have heard them."

One day Mamoon was sailing in a boat on the Tigris River. There was a curtain hanging separating the compartments on the boat. On the opposite side were sitting some sailors who did not know that Mamoon was there. One of them said, "Mamoon must be thinking that I have love and honor for him in my heart but he does not understand that I have no love and honor left in my heart for a man who had his own brother killed." Mamoon began to smile and said, "Friends! Tell me how I can endear myself to this great man."

Yahya bin Aksam says, "I was sleeping in Mamoon's room. I was about to fall asleep when Mamoon wanted to cough. He stuffed his mouth with the lower part of his shirt to prevent making a disturbance for the other sleepers." He used to say, "To me the domination of an argument appears to be better than the domination of nature or power for the latter will vanish with the passing away of nature or power and the former never meets its end." He used to say, "Love of flattery is bad for a king. Worse is a judge's narrow heartedness, which precedes the comprehension of the issue concerned. Still worse is the lack of wisdom on the part of the legal scholars in the matters of religion. Worse still is the miserliness of the

rich, making fun of the elders, laziness of the youth and display of cowardice on the battlefield."

Ali bin Abdur Raheem Marwrozi says, "Mamoon used to say, 'The man is an enemy to his own self who wants the nearness of the person who likes to be away from him, honors the man who does not respect him and feels delighted at the praise of a man whom he does not know.'"

Hudba bin Khalid says, "One day I was partaking of a meal with Mamoon. When the tablecloth was removed, I began to pick up the small pieces of food that had fallen on the floor and eat them. Mamoon said, 'Are you still hungry?' I said, 'I have had my fill but a Hadith says that one who eats the fallen bits of food after the removal of the tablecloth will never be poor.' He then gave me 1000 dinars."

Once Haroon Rasheed visited Kufa after Hajj and requested the presence of the scholars of Hadith from there. All of them came except Abdullah bin Idris and Isa bin Yunus who refused to come. Haroon Rasheed sent his two sons Ameen and Mamoon. When they went to Abdullah bin Idris, he addressed Ameen and narrated a hundred Hadiths to him. Mamoon was sitting and listening. When he stopped narrating, Mamoon said, "If you permit me, I can narrate all those Hadith." He granted permission and Mamoon narrated all the Hadiths quite correctly.

Ibn Idris was stunned by Mamoon's sharp memory. He said, "I was never stunned into silence by the reply of a person except once by the inhabitants of Kufa. They came and complained against the governor of Kufa. I said, 'You lie that governor is very just.' They said, 'Undoubtedly we are liars and Amir al-Muminin is truthful. But why has our city alone been selected and reserved for his justice. Please send him to some other city so that, another city should also be benefited from his justice as our city has been benefited.' I had to say under compulsion, 'Well then, go. I have dismissed him.'"

Yahya bin Aktham states, "One night I was sleeping in Mamoon's room. I felt thirst in middle of the night. I grew restless and began to turn from one side to the other. Mamoon asked me the reason. I said, 'I am thirsty.' He left his bed, brought water and made me drink it. I said, 'Why didn't you call a servant?' He said, 'My father heard from

his father and he heard from his grandfather and he heard from Uqba bin Amir ❖, that the Prophet ﷺ said, 'The leader of the people is their servant.'"

The most praiseworthy and remarkable thing about the acts and achievements of Caliph Mamoon Rasheed is the fact that while nominating his successor he gave proof of his good intention and great courage and was not trapped by his paternal affection as the Caliphs before him who continued the injustice of choosing their sons as their successor and thereby strengthened the curse of hereditary rule on the Islamic Caliphate.

By nominating Imam Ali Raza as his heir-apparent and depriving the dynasty of the Abbasids he acted freely, selected the best man for the job in the way adopted by Abu Bakr ❖ in making Umar bin Khattab ❖ his successor. However, Mamoon came to know very soon that the Abbasids would not accept it willingly and it would lead the Islamic world into trouble by creating disorder and riots. Imam Ali Raza's death nipped Mamoon's wishes in bud. Then he selected his own brother Abu Ishaq Motasim as his successor and deprived his own son Abbas of the throne despite the latter's ability to run the administration and the Caliphate. Since Motasim was more capable than Abbas in administrative affairs, he selected Motasim and did not prefer his son. Mamoon's predecessors had continuously committed the fault of fixing two successors in place of one. Had he followed them, he would have nominated his own son Abbas and been satisfied that his own son would be Caliph after Motasim but he disliked and rejected this act that had no Islamic precedent. He is admired for many things but for this deed, he is not appreciated as much as he deserves.

### **Motasim Billah**

Abu Ishaq Motasim bin Haroon Rasheed was born of a slave girl named Barwah at Zabtarah in Roman territory in 180 A.H. when Caliph Haroon Rasheed himself was attacking the Roman territories. Haroon loved him most and whenever he distributed anything among his children, he used to give him the largest share. Motasim was not interested in acquiring education. He spent his childhood days in games and sports. Haroon had assigned a slave to live with him and



educate him whenever he had a chance. When the slave died Haroon said to Motasim, "Now your slave has died. Say what is your intention now?" Motasim said, "Amir al-Muminin! Yes, the slave is dead and I have gotten rid of the books." This indicates that Motasim was not fond of studying. The fact is that he had only a little formal education. Since he was brought up in the company of the royal family and scholars and had seen the educational meetings during Haroon and Mamoon's regimes, his knowledge was sufficient. Motasim was a heavily built wrestler and a brave man. He was also a good general. Ibn Abi Dawood says: "Motasim often outstretched his arm towards me and said, 'Bite it as hard as you can.' I bit and he said, 'I did not feel anything.' I bit again but in vain. He often broke the wrist of his opponents with the pressure of only two fingers."

Motasim sometimes composed poems and honored the poets. He was also infected with the problem concerning the debate about the creation of the Qur'ān like his brother Mamoon Rasheed. Just as Mamoon persecuted the scholars in connection with this problem, Mōtasim Billah Abbasi also followed suit. He mercilessly tortured Imam Ahmad bin Hambal رحمه الله, in connection with this problem.

Motasim Billah was the governor of Syria and Egypt during the Caliphate of Mamoon Rasheed. When Mamoon invaded the Roman territory, Motasim exhibited such bravery that Mamoon was pleased and made him his heir apparent and deprived his own son, Abbas. The oath for the Caliphate of Motasim Billah was taken the day after the death of Mamoon at Tartoos on 19 Rajab 218 A.H. corresponding to 10 August 833 A.D.

Fadal bin Marwan was his Christian assistant. When the news of Mamoon's death reached Baghdad, Fadal bin Marwan took the oath for Motasim's Caliphate from the inhabitants of Baghdad. Having reached Baghdad, Motasim made Fadal bin Marwan his Prime Minister. When the oath for Motasim was taken, most of the military personnel wanted Abbas bin Mamoon saying that he deserved the Caliphate more than anybody else. Motasim sent for Abbas and he took the oath at Motasim's hands. After the oath, the unrest subsided by itself. The city of Towanah was built under the supervision of Abbas. Immediately after becoming Caliph, Motasim ordered



Towanah to be demolished and rendered desolate and the citizens were sent back from where they had come. After its desolation, he brought all the goods, which he could, from there to Baghdad and burned the rest.

## **The Revolt of Mohammad bin Qasim**

Mohammad bin Qasim bin Ali bin Omar bin Ali bin Husain bin Ali bin Abi Talib lived near the mosque in Madinah and spent his time in prayer. A Khorasani visited him and coaxed him saying that he deserved the Caliphate and that he should take the oath from the people secretly. He therefore began to gather those people who came from Khorasan to perform Hajj and passed through Madinah. They would take the oath for his Caliphate.

Thus when a good number of followers gathered in Khorasan, Mohammad bin Qasim went to Jurjan with the same Khorasani who originally incited him and went into hiding there safely organizing himself. Oaths of supporters continued to be taken there secretly. The rich and the noble visited him. At last Mohammad bin Qasim revolted. The governor of Khorasan Abdullah bin Tahir sent an army to quell the riots. There were several fights on the outskirts of Talqan. Mohammad bin Qasim was defeated in every battle. Finally, he escaped alone to save his life. He was arrested in Nasa and brought to Abdullah bin Tahir who sent him to Mutasim in Baghdad. He put him under the custody of Masroor Kabeer. Mohammad bin Qasim arrived in Baghdad on 15 Rabi-al-Awwal 219 A.H. and escaped unnoticed from captivity on the first night of Shawwal which corresponds to the Islamic holiday Eid al-Fitr following Ramadan in 219 A.H.

## **The Extermination of the Zutts**

In Jumad-al-Thani 219 A.H., Caliph Mutasim deputed his general Ajeef bin Ambasa to finish the battle of Zutt. He had been at war with those plunderers for seven months and at last he forced them to ask for safety and pardon by themselves in Dhul Hijjah 219 A.H. and they surrendered themselves to Ajeef. Ajeef took them numbering 17,000 including women and children to Baghdad. That included 12,000 men who were physically fit to fight. Ajeef entered Baghdad on 10

Muharram 220 A.H. Motasim himself boarded a boat and came to Shamamah. He inspected the Zutt captives and ordered that they should be settled near Zarbah close to the Roman border. They were therefore resettled there. The Romans later decided to attack the Islamic territories and led a surprise night attack in this area and massacred them not sparing a single soul. Thus, the group of Zutt met their end.

## **The City of Samarra**

Caliph Motasim was a soldier. He turned his attention more towards the military. His predecessors, the Abbasi Caliphs, attached more importance to the Khorasanis. They had rarely relied on the Arab army. Although they faced dangers from the Khorasanis more than once, they depended more on the Khorasanis and the Iranians in comparison with the Arabs on the whole. The Arab elements continued to become weaker. Motasim Billah concentrated on the organization and improvement of the military from the beginning of his Caliphate. He purchased thousands of Turkish slaves and formed an army. He also had Turks from Farghana and Ashrosna (Turkistan) recruited.

He liked their style of fighting and their ability to bear extreme hardship. Until this time the army was composed of Arabs and the Iranians and they were always at war with the Turks along the borders of the Islamic territory. The Turks and their leaders were subjugated and had to pay taxes, then they revolted and fought against their conquerors. They were not considered reliable to be recruited into the army. Motasim however, recruited them into his army in such large numbers and appointed them to so many high posts that they were on par with the Iranian military in respect to their number. The Arab tribes continued to decrease until only the Egyptian and Yemeni tribes were left in the Caliph's army. The Caliph combined all the Arab divisions and formed a separate army and called it Magharba.

The Turk army was made up of soldiers from Samarkand, Faraghâna and Ashrosna, which was very powerful and was named Faraghna. The Khorasani army developed an enmity with the Faraghna army. Since Caliph Motasim had organized the new Turkish army with great

care, all facilities were made available to its soldiers. Their uniforms were more beautiful, their horses were better and their salaries and allowances were more than the others. The Khorasanis began to quarrel with them in Baghdad. Observing the situation, Mutasim set up a military cantonment at a distance of 90 miles from Baghdad on the Qatoun tributary of the Tigris River. He built a palace for himself, houses for the soldiers, a large market and a central mosque. Other necessary buildings were erected and he settled the Turks there and then he moved to the newly built city.

He called it *Surra man Raā*, which came to be known as Samarra in common usage. It was built in 220 A.H. and the same year it was declared the capital in place of Baghdad. In a short time, it was on par with Baghdad in respect of its beauty and population and the Turks instead of the Arabs and Khorasanis came to dominate over the capital and the Caliph. The same year Mohammad bin Ali Raza bin Musa bin Qasim bin Jafar Sadiq died and was buried in Baghdad.

### **The Removal of Fadal bin Marwan**

The same year, 220 A.H., the Caliph received complaints of corruption and dishonesty against his Prime Minister Fadal bin Marwan. He assigned auditors to take account of the expenditures. They found a discrepancy of 1,000,000 dinars. The Caliph deducted this sum from his goods and belongings and put him under surveillance in a village near Mousil. He then appointed Mohammad bin Abdul Malik bin Abban bin Hamza as his Prime Minister in place of Fadal. Mohammad bin Abdul Malik was known as Ibn Zayyat because his grand father Abban lived in a village and brought oil from there and sold it in Baghdad. Mohammad bin Abdul Malik was brought up and educated in Baghdad and achieved high qualifications. The period he was Prime Minister extended to the regimes of Mutasim, Wathiq and Motawakkil. Just as Qadi Yahya bin Aksam during Haroon Rasheed's regime was not a minister, yet he was more powerful and influential than the Prime Minister and always accompanied Mamoon, similarly Qadi Yahya bin Aksam's disciple Ahmed bin Abi Dawood lived with Mutasim. Though he too was not a minister, he enjoyed as much power and authority as the Prime Minister did. It is said that whatever

atrocities Mamoon and Motasim perpetrated on the scholars in connection with the debate about the created nature of the Quran were done at the insistence and instigation of these two men. However, it was Ibn Abi Dawood at Motasim's court, who supported the Arabs and it was due to him that they commanded some respect in the capital otherwise the Turks and the Iranians dominated everywhere.

### **Babak Khurmi and Afsheen Haider**

It has already been mentioned that all the generals of Mamoon Rasheed who went to fight against Babak Khurmi were defeated. They had made the city Buz their headquarters and the people of the adjoining areas recognized his rule. All the governors and noblemen were afraid of him and entertained his men to win his pleasure. Caliph Motasim assigned Abu Sayeed Mohammad bin Yusuf to punish Babak. Abu Sayeed first had all the forts situated between Ardabil and Azerbaijan repaired which Babak had damaged or demolished. Then he gathered the necessary provisions of food and weapons and then he marched towards Babak. A division of Babak's army launched a night attack on one of the cities.

When Abu Sayeed was informed of the night attack, he took his army and set out in pursuit. He caught up with them and fought and defeated Babak's army. Many of his men were killed and captured and the goods they had looted were recovered. This was the first setback, which Babak's army received. Its impact was that those leaders who supported Babak out of fear but were actually against him began to sympathize with the Islamic forces. One of Babak's generals Asmat came to stay at the fort of Azerbaijan, Mohammad bin Bayeeth the caretaker, made arrangements for a feast, and lodged his men as usual. He treated them with honor but arrested them at night and sent him to Caliph Motasim and killed his men. Caliph Motasim made him divulge the secrets of Babak's cities and forts. He told him everything in the hope of being released. Motasim imprisoned Asmat and decided to send a more powerful and veteran general to fight with Babak and put an end to his evil for good.

Haider bin Kaoos was Motasim's greatest general. He was the son of the king of Ashrosna whose family name was Afsheen. He had

embraced Islam and his Islamic name was Haider and was known as Afsheen Haider. He was the commander in chief of the entire Faraghna or Turkish army. He had accepted Islam at Motasim's hands during Mamoon Rasheed's Caliphate and was constantly in his service. During the period of his governorship of Syria and Egypt, Motasim had tested his military services and found him to be a real veteran. After assuming power he organized the Faraghna army, he appointed Afsheen Haider, Itakh, Ashnas, Ajeez, Waseef and Bagha Kabeer all Turks, leaders of the army. Afsheen Haider was made the commander in chief

He had palaces built for all these commanders in Samarra. After assessing Babak's power and the difficult terrain of mountain passages and passes, Caliph Motasim sent Afsheen Haider to fight him. Besides divisions of Turks, Khorasani and Arab armies were also sent under his command. A number of local fighters also set out for the purpose of Jihad. After reaching there, Afsheen began a chain of battles very carefully and efficiently. Having sent him with full equipage and men, Motasim later dispatched Itakh with a fresh army as reinforcements. After a few days, he sent Bagha Kabeer with arms and necessary provisions. Afsheen received 10,000 dirhams daily in addition to all military expenditures, food and other necessities when at war and siege and 5,000 dirhams from the Caliph's treasury besides his salary when at peace during the entire period of war with Babak. The war continued for a year and a half.

Afsheen reached Ardabil and continued establishing outposts at short distances in order to facilitate food supply and communication. Then he entered the mountains, which were under Babak's occupation and fixed the army at strategic locations, setup communications and coordinated the movements of his commanders by flags or messengers and marched on by pushing Babak's army back towards the fort of Buz. He also made careful defensive arrangements against night attacks and ambushes. The climate and the severe cold of winter made the Arabs and the Iraqis more uncomfortable than the Khorasanis and the Turks.

Jafar bin Dinar Khayyat was the chief of the local fighters who had come out for Jihad. He, Bagha and Itakh fought heroically. Babak and

his generals Azeen and Tarah Khan exhibited considerable military skill. Abu Sayeed who had been at war with Babak long before Afsheen's arrival began to work under him along with his army. The long chain of battles resulted in Babak Khurmi's defeat and captivity. He was sent to Caliph Motasim at Samarra. Babak and his brother were arrested in Shawwal 222 A.H. and Afsheen was sent to Samarra in Saffar 223 A.H. At the receipt of the news of victory and Babak's capture, Motasim passed orders that Afsheen should be presented at all the stages between Barzand (Azerbaijan) to Samarra with a robe of honor and a well-saddled horse and accorded a royal and grand reception. When Afsheen approached the capital Samarra, the Caliph's son Wathiq received him at the city gate.

When he appeared in the Caliph's court, he was seated on a golden chair and a crown was put on his head. A very expensive robe of honor and a sum of 2,000,000 dirhams was given to him as a reward and 1,000,000 dirhams was given to be distributed among his soldiers. Babak was slain by the order of Caliph Motasim at Samarra. His brother was sent to Baghdad where he was killed. Their dead bodies were hung up for display. Babak had maintained his influence for about 20 years. During that period, he killed 155,000 people, 7,600 Muslim men and women were rescued and released from his captivity. Afsheen arrested 17 men and 30 women from Babak's family.

### **The Capture of Amurya and the Battle of Rome**

When Babak Khurmi felt desperate during the siege by the Islamic army he dispatched a letter to Nofil bin Michael, the Roman emperor stating: "Motasim has sent all his forces against me. Baghdad, Samarra and all the provinces are quite defenseless at this time and all the leaders of the army are at war with me. You will not get a better chance to capture these territories don't let it slip through your fingers and march on Baghdad conquering the Islamic territories." Babak felt that if the Roman emperor invaded, the Islamic army would have to be divided into two parts reducing its pressure on him. The Roman emperor read the letter and attacked with 100,000 soldiers but by that time the war with Babak had ended, and the Islamic army was poised to stop him. Nofil first launched a night attack on Zabtarah and killed

all the men who fought against him and captured their women and children. Then he turned to Maltiya and did the same thing there.

The news of the capture and ruin of Zabtarah and Maltiya reached Motasim on 29 Rabia Thani 223 A.H. The narrator also told of a Roman soldier dragging away a Hashimite woman and she was shouting, "O Motasim, O Motasim." As soon as he heard this, Motasim stood up from the throne of Caliphate saying, "Labbaik, Labbaik" (I am here, I am here). He jumped on his horse and ordered the drum of departure to be beaten. The soldiers and their leaders came and joined him. All the royal army and a group of Mujahideen (those fighting for the cause of Allah) followed him. He sent Ajeef bin Ambasa and Omar Farghani ahead with a fast moving vanguard to reach Zabtarah as soon as possible and console and boost the moral of the people there and drive away the Romans but the Romans had left by the time the two commanders arrived there.

Then Caliph Motasim arrived with his army. He wanted to know the strongest and most important city of the Romans in that area. He was told that Amurya was such a strong and fortified fort and city. It was very important also because it was the birth place of the Roman emperor Nofil. Motasim said, "Zabtarah is my birth-place. The Roman emperor has ruined it and in retaliation I will ruin his birth place Amurya." He therefore made available equipage and war material on an unprecedented scale. Then he made Ashnas the commander of the vanguard. Mohammad bin Ibrahim bin Mus'ab was made the supplier of reinforcements to him. Then he fixed Itakh on the right flank and Jafar bin Dinar Khayyat on the left flank, giving the middle part to Ajeef bin Ambasa. Having made these arrangements, he entered Roman territory and made Ajeef bin Ambasa the supreme commander of all the forces. He arrived at Saluqiya and encamped along the tributary San, which was at a distance of one day's journey from Tartoos.

Here it must be remembered that Motasim had already sent Afsheen to Armenia as governor of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Afsheen with his army entered Roman territory. A part of the Islamic army marched forward and occupied Angoor where it captured a big stock of grain, which the Muslims needed to continue the fight. The Roman emperor



wanted to confront the Islamic army at Angoorā and had made all the necessary materials and food available there. However, the army stationed there and their commanding officer had a falling out and as a result, the army retreated. Meanwhile the Roman emperor himself had gone to the Armenian border to stop Afsheen's advance. After being defeated, he turned back to Angoorā but the Muslims had already captured it. Being compelled he then turned to Amurya and made the necessary provisions of all war materials available there. He collected the army from all corners of his empire and became busy securing all kinds of military weapons. At Angoorā Motasim encamped and waited for Afsheen, where he called upon the Caliph and joined him on the expedition.

At the end of Shaban 223 A.H., Caliph Motasim along with his army left Angoorā to declare war. He fixed Afsheen on the right flank and Ashnas on the left and he remained in the middle. The Islamic army marched forward and laid siege to Amurya, and after making fortifications started moving towards the battlements. From 6 Ramadan 223 A.H. to the end of Shawwal 223 A.H., 55 days in all, they kept Amurya encircled and finally conquered it. They captured or killed the people there. Motasim continued to sell the booty for five days and what remained was consigned to flames. Then he ordered Amurya to be pulled down and leveled to the ground. The army destroyed it completely. Emperor Nofil fled and went to Constantinople and Caliph Motasim divided the captives among his generals and marched towards Tartōos.

### **The Death of Abbas bin Mamoon**

Ajeef and Afsheen were rivals. Caliph Motasim often criticized Ajeef's activities and that amounted to his humiliation in Afsheen's eyes. Consequently, Ajeef's loyalty underwent a change and he began to hatch a conspiracy against the Caliph. On the occasion of the invasion of the Roman Empire, he said to Abbas Mamoon who was with him on the journey, "You committed a blunder mistake by taking the oath at Motasim's hands. Had you expressed your mind to be Caliph yourself, all the army chiefs were ready to lend you support." This inducement and more set Abbas thinking. Ajeef mentioned such



things so many times that Abbas decided to revolt. It was proposed that first of all the army chiefs should be converted to their views and then by killing Motasim, Afsheen and Ashnas simultaneously, they would declare Abbas's Caliphate. They acted as proposed and many soldiers were persuaded to recognize Abbas as Caliph. While returning from Amurya after its conquest, Motasim stumbled upon the conspiracy.

Motasim first imprisoned Abbas and handed him over to Afsheen. Then Masha bin Sahal, Omar Farghani and Ajeef were arrested one after another and thrown into captivity. First Masha bin Sahal was slain. Then they reached Banj and put Abbas into a sack and stitched it closed and caused him to die of suffocation. Then they reached Nasiban, had a ditch dug out and buried Farghani in it alive. Then they reached Mousil and there Ajeef was also stuffed into a sack and sewn closed leading to his suffocation and death. After entering Samarra, Motasim had all the descendants of Caliph Mamoon Rasheed rounded up and put under house arrest until they died. During this journey, Caliph Motasim picked up all the suspects and had them killed.

### **The Revolt of Tabristan**

Mazyar bin Qarin, the ruler of Tabristan, was the subordinate and paid taxes to the governor of Khorasan, Abdullah bin Tahir. There developed an estrangement between them. Mazyar said, "I shall send the taxes directly to the capital but not directly to Abdullah bin Tahir." Abdullah bin Tahir took it as an affront to his rule and disliked it. The quarrel continued for sometime as Mazyar continued to send the taxes directly to the capital where Abdullah bin Tahir's man continued receiving it.

During the war with Babak, Afsheen was empowered to spend money freely and Motasim continued to dispatch all types of goods and money to him. Afsheen was highly economical in spending it and the rest he used to send to his native land Ashrosna (Turkistan).

These goods meant for Azerbaijan used to pass through Khorasan. When Abdullah bin Tahir came to know that Afsheen was sending provisions, arms, and money to his motherland, he realized that something was wrong. He caught and imprisoned the men who

carried these goods, seized them and wrote to Afsheen, "Some of your soldiers were carrying such and such goods, I arrested and jailed them and distributed the goods among my soldiers because I am preparing to invade Turkistan. Though they told me that they were sent by you, their statement appears to be absolutely false because had they not been thieves and been sent by you, you would have definitely informed me." At the sight of the letter, Afsheen felt extremely ashamed and wrote back to him that they were not thieves but his men. At the receipt of the letter Abdullah bin Tahir released them but the goods he had seized were not returned.

He sent a secret report about it to Caliph Motasim although he did not pay any obvious attention to it. Afsheen wanted to establish his own government in Ashrosna and he was making preparations for it in advance. When he returned to Samarra after the war with Babak was over, he hoped that Motasim would make him the governor of Khorasan and he would have an opportunity to found his own kingdom. But Motasim made him the governor of Armenia and Azerbaijan instead and this disturbed his plan.

Immediately after that, the Roman war took place and Afsheen had to participate, Motasim himself was present and the man he made the commander-in-chief was Ajeef who considered himself to be the rival of Afsheen. What happened to Ajeef has been mentioned above.

Now Afsheen thought out a new plan, he wrote a confidential letter to Mazyar the ruler of Tabristan, and instigated him to rise against Abdullah bin Tahir. It read:

There is none to patronize and promote the Zoroastrian religion except you and me. Babak tried to support it but he met his end due to his own foolishness. He did not act upon my advice. Now there is still a golden chance at present. You simply rise in revolt. They will only send me to face you. Now I have a very powerful army. I shall conspire with you and we shall join forces. Then only the westerners, Arabs and Khorasanis will fight against us. The westerners are very few. An ordinary division of our army will be sufficient to face them. As for the Arabs, give them a morsel and then pound their heads with stones. As far as the Khorasanis are concerned, their enthusiasm is just

like boiling milk it rises and then the next moment it falls. With a small amount of determination, they will be finished quickly. If you gear up a little then the religion, which saw its rise during the regimes of the non-Arab kings, may again be established and promoted.

Mazyar was overjoyed reading the letter. He rose in revolt. He collected taxes from his subjects for a year in advance, procured the weapons of war, repaired the forts and was ready to face the most powerful army. When Abdullah bin Tahir was informed of Mazyar's revolt, he sent his own uncle Hasan bin Husain with an army towards him. When Motasim found out, he issued orders for the dispatch of armies from the capital and other places to reinforce Abdullah bin Tahir. He did not allow Afsheen to go to the conflict. Consequently, Mazyar was arrested and presented before Abdullah bin Tahir who in turn sent him to Motasim. Motasim sent him to jail. When Hasan bin Husain caught Mazyar, he seized Afsheen's letter to him. Other letters of the same nature sent by Afsheen were also recovered from him. Abdullah bin Tahir sent those letters to Caliph Motasim, who took and kept them under his custody and outwardly did not attach any importance to them. This happened in 224 A.H.

### **The Revolt in Kurdistan**

The revolt in Tabristan had hardly been stamped out when Jafar bin Fahar, a Kurd, collected a huge number of Kurds in the adjoining areas of Mousil and rose in revolt. Although its border touched the borders of Azerbaijan and Armenia, Motasim sent Abdullah bin Sayyed bin Anas to punish Jafar and did not send Afsheen on this expedition. Abdullah bin Sayyed arrived there and marshaled his troops in battle array. The battles continued until Motasim sent another general Itakh with a strong army. Jafar bin Fahar was killed in action and his men were caught and killed. This revolt probably engineered by Afsheen ended in 225 A.H.

### **The Revolt in Armenia and Azerbaijan**

After having made one of his relatives Mankajur his deputy and having handed the governership of Azerbaijan over to him, Afsheen settled in the capital. Mankajur somehow found a large treasure of

Babak Khurmi in a certain village. He did not inform the Caliph and kept it himself. Motasim's informant told him. When Mankajur knew of this, he decided to murder him. The poor reporter sought safety from the people of Ardabil and they tried to stop Mankajur but he was ready to kill them too. When informed, Motasim sent an order for Mankajur's removal to Afsheen and dispatched Bagha Kabeer with an army to Azerbaijan to take his place. When Mankajur heard that he was deposed and that Bagha Kabeer was coming to take charge he revolted. He left Ardabil fought and was defeated. Bagha Kabeer moved forward and captured Ardabil. Mankajur fled and took refuge in a fort in Azerbaijan. He remained there for about a month. Finally, one of his own men captured him when he was off his guard and handed him over to Bagha Kabeer. Bagha Kabeer returned to Samarra with him and brought him to Caliph Motasim who put him in jail.

### **The Death of Afsheen**

The above-mentioned incident strengthened Caliph Motasim's suspicion against Afsheen and he became sure of his involvement in it. Afsheen also realized that the Caliph had become suspicious about him. He therefore began to think of ways how to flee the capital. First, he thought of going to Azerbaijan and Armenia and from there to his native country Ashrosna via Khirz. However, he could not execute this plan simply because Caliph Motasim had sent his deputy in Mankajur's place as Afsheen's deputy and Afsheen knew that he would not be safe in Azerbaijan.

At last, he made up his mind to host a feast for the Caliph, courtiers and chiefs of the government. He wanted to keep them busy eating and drinking for the whole day and when they went to sleep, he would slip away. He had hardly decided on his final plan when by chance he got angry with his servant who was also his confident and abused him. The servant in retaliation went to Itakh and disclosed Afsheen's intentions to him. Itakh at once took the servant with him and went to Caliph Motasim and informed him that Afsheen was preparing to escape. Motasim called him at once, had him stripped of rank and sent him to jail and did not show any concern about it. Then he wrote to the governor of Khorasan, Abdullah bin Tahir to arrest

and send Afsheen's son Hasan bin Afsheen who was the ruler of Mawaraunnahr and was living in Ashrosna. Hasan bin Afsheen often complained against the ruler of Bukhara, Nuh bin Asad. Abdullah bin Tahir wrote to Hasan bin Ashfeen, "I hand over to you the rule of Bukhara go to Bukhara, show this order of mine to Nuh bin Asad and take charge of Bukhara." Hasan bin Afsheen was overjoyed at the letter and immediately left for Bukhara. Abdullah bin Tahir had already written to the ruler of Bukhara Nuh bin Asad, "I have sent Hasan bin Afsheen to you on this pretext. Arrest him as soon as he enters Bukhara and send him to me." By this ploy, he was arrested and brought to Abdullah bin Tahir in Merv.

Abdullah bin Tahir sent him to Motasim. When Hasan bin Afsheen was brought as a captive, Motasim commissioned a committee comprised of his Prime Minister Mohammad bin Abdul Malik, Qadi Ahmad bin Abi Dawood, Ishaq bin Ibrahim and other members of the government and asked them to probe Afsheen's affairs and award him the punishment which he deserved. Though Caliph Motasim could have had him slain immediately, he took this very wise step in order to counter act any possible move in the army against him for killing Afsheen.

Motasim was perfectly aware of Afsheen's evil designs and he had come to know during the war against Babak that he was stealing and sending the stolen royal goods to his son who he had already appointed the ruler of his native land Ashrosna. Since Afsheen was at war with an enemy who had not been able to be subdued for 20 years, Motasim remained patient. The success of the expedition against Babak was no ordinary feat and to keep Afsheen deprived of reward and take him to task for his betrayal might have proved fatal to Motasim and no power on the earth could have saved him from the anger of his military. Furthermore, Afsheen was expected to undergo a real change for the better but when his letters and policy proved him a traitor, Motasim was justified in what he did.

The commission of the Prime Minister and other leaders began the hearing and investigating Afsheen's case very carefully and methodically. He was brought daily to the court and statements of witnesses and documentary proof were presented in his presence.

Mazyar who was still in jail was brought before Afsheen. Afsheen's letters were read and shown to Afsheen. Afsheen pleaded guilty. Mazyar also spoke plainly and stated the facts clearly. Then things about Afsheen's denial of Islam came under discussion, which proved Afsheen a hypocrite. He desecrated the Qur'an, the mosques and the Imams of the mosques, he had the Zoroastrian books recited daily and kept them with him all the time, insolence against Islam and the Prophet Mohammad ﷺ while offering prayer with the Muslims and practicing all the tenets of Islam outwardly. In short, it was proved solidly, absolutely and convincingly that Afsheen was not a Muslim at heart rather he was engaged in defrauding the Muslims, bringing about the overthrow of the government and ending the Islamic government and establishing a Zoroastrian kingdom. The hearing of this case closed peacefully and the final verdict was this that Mazyar should be given 400 lashes and Afsheen was given capital punishment. Mazyar could not bear 400 lashes and he died. Afsheen was sent to the gallows and his dead body was put on public display. This took place in Shaban 226 A.H. Ishaq bin Yahya bin Mu'az took over as the Commander-in-chief in place of Afsheen.

### **The Death of Motasim**

After ending the threat from Afsheen, Caliph Motasim Billah surveyed the borders of his occupied territories. When he was satisfied that there was no danger of any unrest or revolt, he said, "While Banu Umayyah were rulers and Caliphs, we did not get anything from their kingship and power. However, when we received the Caliphate, Banu Umayyah's kingdom and government continued in Andalus. Therefore, we should move towards the west and take Andalus from Banu Umayyah." He had his treasury, war and traveling expenses estimated and began to prepare to invade Andalus. During that period, he was informed that Abu Harb Yemeni who lived in Palestine and claimed to belong to the dynasty of Banu Umayyah, had collected a 100,000 man army and was about to revolt.

As stated, Abu Harb lived in Palestine. One day when he was out, a soldier came to his house and stayed there. The women folk forbade him to do so. The soldier beat them up and occupied the outer part of

the house meant for male guests by force. When Abu Harb came back, he attacked the soldier and killed him. Out of fear of the officials, he went to hide in the mountains of Jordan. He wore a veil over his face and began to preach to the local people. They became his devotees. He started criticizing and speaking ill of the Caliph. In this way, about 100,000 people became his disciples, collected under his banner and were ready to rebel against the Caliph. Motasim deputed Raja bin Ayyub with 1,000 soldiers to punish him. But Raja bin Ayyub was overawed by the greater number of Abu Harb's followers and hesitated in waging the battle. He decided to wait for the planting season, letting Abu Harb's followers who were mostly farmers, become busy with their agricultural activities, before attacking. During this time, Caliph Motasim Billah died on 30 Rabi-al-Awwal 227 A.H. and his trial of strength against Banu Umayyah remained unfulfilled. After his death, his son Wathiq Billah became Caliph and the people took the oath at his hands. Wathiq led Motasim's burial service and he was buried at Samarra.

### **The Characteristics of Motasim's Caliphate**

As Caliph Motasim himself was not an educated man, the academic activities, which began during Haroon's rule and reached their pinnacle under Mamoon's regime, dwindled. Motasim was interested more in war and conquest. During his regime, territories of Rome, Khizr (the area north of the Black Sea), Mawaraunnahr, Kabul and Sistan were conquered. He fought the Roman emperor very hard and surpassed any previous successes by Muslim forces against the Romans. The killing of 30,000 and capturing an equal number of Romans, in the conquest of Amurya, made the Romans extremely terrified of Motasim. The number of kings who assembled at Motasim's door had never been seen assembling at any other Caliph's door. Motasim was also fond of constructing buildings. The daily expenses of his kitchen were 1,000 dinars.

He purchased many Turk slaves and increased their number. He made a few select Turk slaves his commanders and generals. During his regime, the Turks progressed rapidly, became cultured and brave and began to exhibit valor. By increasing the Turk armies and letting them



progress he wanted to break the power of the Khorasanis who had earlier reduced and ruined the Arab power. These same Turks later on would be responsible for the ruin of the Abbasi Caliphate. Motasim committed an error in making a third nation powerful. He should have helped the Arabs to be a match for the Khorasanis. However, since his ancestors from the very beginning of their rule regarded the Arabs as their enemies and relied more on the Khorasanis and distrusted the Arabs he dared not disturb this age-old family tradition.

Motasim had heard about the Khorasani's rebellions and conspiracies and knew how his forefathers had faced their intrigues repeatedly. He also knew that his family's old rivals, the Alawiites, commanded respect and popularity among the Khorasanis and the Arabs and used their support against him. Therefore, Motasim made a third nation powerful, which had not been influenced by the Alawiites. This third nation, the Turks, had not yet grown intimate and attached to Islam due to their ignorance and barbarism. Though the Turks had been made subservient and subdued for some time, Islam was not preached to them as it should have been. Another reason was that only Turk chiefs ruled over the Turk territories of Mawaraunnahr (present day Uzbekistan) and they paid taxes to the Islamic governments.

When these Turk converts made sudden progress and saw that they were themselves a powerful Islamic force they started dreaming about putting an end to the Abbasid Caliphate as is evident from Afsheen's case.

Although Caliph Motasim was uneducated, he was wise. He recruited the Turks into the armed forces by empowering them yet he retained the ability to neutralize the dangers in this strategy. Therefore, they were not able to harm the Islamic government as long as he lived. Had his successors been as capable as he was or had he ruled for a longer period, the flaws that developed later on might have been corrected.

Truly, these are only speculations after the fact and not the most fundamental factors in the condition of the Caliphate. The real and the grossest error was the Muslims had accorded recognition to the reign of succession in the Islamic Caliphate and the son was entitled to



succeed his father as Caliph. This sinful practice has always inflicted great harm on Islamic rule and the Muslims. Forgetting the tradition of Abu Bakr ؓ and Omar bin Khattab ؓ led them to see these unfortunate days. انا لله وانا اليه راجعون

It is from Motasim's Caliphate that the Turks political life cycle starts.

Motasim may also be called the Caliph with a connection to the number 8. He was the 8th child of Caliph Haroon Rasheed. He was born in 180 A.H. or according to another tradition in 178 A.H. In both these years, the digit 8 is present. He sat on the throne in 218 A.H. Motasim was the 8th Caliph of the Abbasids. He lived for 48 years. He had 8 sons and 8 daughters. His birth constellation was Scorpio, the eighth sign of the zodiac. He was Caliph for 8 years, 8 months and 8 days. He had 8 palaces constructed. He won 8 major battles. 8 kings were brought to his court. He had 8 formidable enemies killed, like Afsheen, Ajeef, Abbas, Babak, and Mazyar. He left 800,000 dinars, 800,000 dirhams, 8 thousand horses, 8 thousand slaves and 8 thousand slave-girls as his legacy. He died on the 8<sup>th</sup> day in the month of Rabia Awwal.

Like Mamoon Rasheed, he was also obsessed with the question of the Quran's creation and most of the scholars were hurt due to his preoccupation with this obscure philosophical point. Had he not suffered from this shortcoming he would have been called the greatest Caliph of the Abbasid dynasty. During his regime, the glory of the Abbasid Caliphate reached its zenith following which signs of decline began to be visible.

### Wathiq Billah

The kunya of Wathiq Billah bin Motasim Billah bin Haroon Rasheed bin Mahdi bin Mansoor Abbasi was Abu Jafar or Abul Qasim. His real name was Haroon. He was born of Qaratees, a slave girl, on the way to Makkah on 20 Shaban 196 A.H. His father made him his heir-apparent. He sat on the throne after his death. He was very handsome and fair complexioned. His beard was thick and shapely. His fair complexion was combined with paleness. There was a visible black mole in the white of his eyes. He was a great poet and literary expert. He was as efficient in Arabic literature as Mamoon to a certain extent

superior to him. But he was inferior to him in philosophy, practical skills and wisdom. He had seen academic symposia and seminars during Mamoon's regime. He had a taste for knowledge and he was called Mamoon junior or Mamoon the second.

Wathiq had committed to memory so many verses that none among the Abbasid Caliphs could match him in this respect. He was fond of eating and drinking like his father. He was a voracious eater. He used to give away big prizes and remunerations to poets and literary men. He honored men of letters and thought it essential to treat them respectfully. However, he inherited the craze about the issue of the Quran and the created or uncreated word of Allah from his father and he was so over ambitious in this respect that he killed great scholars with his own hands thinking it to be a virtuous act.

In the last phase of his life, a remarkable thing happened which led him to reduce or totally stop his activities about the Quran and its creation. Abu Abdur Rahman Abdullah bin Muhammad Azdi who was Imam Abu Dawood and Nasai's teacher was brought to the court as a captive for his disbelief in the issue of the Quran and its creation. He put a question to Qadi Ahmad bin Abi Dawood who had been enjoying a status equivalent to that of the Prime Minister in the court since Motasim's time and believed in the issue of the Quran and its creation: "Please tell me whether the Prophet ﷺ knew or did not know that the Qur'ân is a creation."

Qadi Ahmad said: "Yes. He ﷺ knew it." Abu Abdur Rahman said: "Did the Prophet ﷺ give any instructions to the people regarding the belief of the Qur'ân to be a creation?" Qadi Ahmad said: "The Prophet ﷺ did not say anything about it." Then Abu Abdur Rahman said, "This information the Prophet ﷺ did not teach the people and did not force them to believe in despite his knowledge of it, so then why don't you take the people's reticence as sufficient and why do you force them to accept it?" Wathiq was startled hearing this, stood up, left the court and went to his chamber in the palace and lay down on his bed. He kept repeating, "We are adopting stern measures regarding an issue about which the Prophet ﷺ kept silent." He then ordered Abu Abdur Rahman to be released and sent him to his native country comfortably with 300 red dinars as a reward.

## **Abu Harb and the Natives of Damascus**

While discussing Caliph Motasim, it has been stated above that Motasim had sent Raja bin Ayyub to punish Abu Harb Yemeni. After waiting for a few days, he started a series of battles with Abu Harb. In the meantime, Motasim Billah died and Wathiq Billah succeeded to the throne. As soon as the natives of Damascus heard about his death, they rebelled. They besieged their governor within the Governor's headquarters and were collecting and arraying soldiers and had gathered a big army.

As soon as Wathiq heard the news, he ordered Raja bin Ayyub to control Damascus first. At that time, he was at war with Abu Harb at Ramla. In order to comply with this order, he left a very small army behind and taking the rest of the army with him proceeded towards Damascus. The natives of Damascus fought a bloody battle with him in which 1,500 natives of Damascus and 300 of Raja's soldiers were killed. After having been defeated, the natives of Damascus begged for security and peace and the rebellion ended. After Damascus Raja went towards Ramla, defeated Abu Harb and took him captive. Abu Harb lost 20,000 men in this battle.

## **The Rise and Fall of Ashnas**

Following his succession to the throne Wathiq Billah made the Turk slave, Ashnas his deputy with total executive powers over all the Islamic territories. Prime Minister Mohammad bin Abdul Malik bin Zayyat who had been at this post since Motasim's times continued to enjoy this status even during Wathiq's regime. The post, which was given to Ashnas, was called Deputy of the Dynasty it was created by Wathiq Billah for the first time.

The Deputy of the Dynasty used all powers of the Caliph and was of higher rank than the Prime Minister. No other Caliph invested anybody with so much power before this time. Though the Turks had suffered a loss following Afsheen's death, his forces, platoons and cavalries still survived and enjoyed honor as usual. When Ashnas came into full power over the entire Islamic world following Wathiq Billah's

succession to the throne, it marks the establishment of Turk rule in the world of Islam. However, Ashnas did not enjoy this power long and his powers were limited very soon. However, this precedent would prove to be responsible for the downfall and ruin of the Abbasid Caliphate.

Wathiq Billah was fond of academic symposiums he used to sit with the scholars, the members of the government and listened to academic debates and ancient traditions. Most of the scholars were Arabs and they narrated the events of Haroon Rasheed's times whenever they had a chance. They narrated to Wathiq Billah stories of the Barmuk's academic tastes and their generosity along with their power and influence and then details of their conspiracies against the dynasty of the Caliph and all the events that led to their ruin in a proper and effective manner. Consequently, his eyes opened a bit and he began to put the Turks and Khorasani chiefs under surveillance. Most of them were found to be involved in misappropriation and Wathiq Billah started the process of collecting fines from them. It was in this connection that Ashnas's powers were restricted. He died in 230 A.H.

### **The End of Arab Dignity**

Until this point, the Abbasid dynasty had been reducing the leadership roles and positions of honor of the Arabs and the non-Arabs had been continuously improving their positions. Because of being the cradle of Islam, Arabia commanded a special respect and because the Arabs were the first servants of Islam, there was a special reverence for them. The dynasty of the Caliph itself came from an Arab family. That was why the non-Arabs never wished to humiliate the Arabs nor did the Caliphs send Khorasani and Turk armies to the Hijaz and Yemen to punish the Arab tribes. Whenever there arose any need for making arrangements for maintaining the administration of the Arab provinces, Arab, Iraqi or Syrian soldiers were sent.

The consequence of this special reverence was that though the Arabs were weakened, every heart harbored honor for them. No one questioned the dignity of the Arabs. During Caliph Wathiq's regime the Arabs lost this special acknowledgement. The details in brief are that there lived a good number of people belonging to the tribe of Banu Sulaim in the adjoining regions of Madinah. They attacked Banu Kanana and looted their goods.

Such incidents of lootings and killings began among the Arabs simply because they were dismissed from serving in the conquering armies and the Abbasid Caliphs had gradually eliminated them from the military. In this situation, the fighting instincts of the Arabs began to be channeled into looting, plundering and robbing.

When the ruler of Madinah, Mohammad bin Saleh, heard of Banu Sulaim's excesses he sent an army to punish and discipline them. The army suffered a crushing defeat at their hands leading to the spread of anarchy in all the regions lying between Makkah and Madinah and bringing to an abrupt halt the movement of caravans. When Caliph Wathiq Billah received the news, he sent his Turk commander Bagha Kabeer with an army to the Hijaz. He reached Madinah in Shaban 230 A.H. and confrontations with Banu Sulaim took place. He defeated the Banu Sulaim. He arrested 1,000 of them, imprisoned them in Madinah and killed many of them.

Bagha Kabeer along with his Turk army stayed in Madinah for about four months and continued to humiliate, subdue and terrify the Arab tribes in various ways. After the Hajj, Bagha Kabeer turned to Banu Hilal, punished them like he had punished Banu Sulaim and arrested 300 men. Then he turned to Banu Murrah. He went to Fadak and encamped there for 40 days and captured many men of Banu Fazarah and Banu Murrah and imprisoned them in Madinah. Then he called the chiefs and headmen of Banu Ghaffar, Thalbah and Ashja and took from them the oath of allegiance. Then he arrested 3,000 men of Banu Kilab released 2,000 of them and imprisoned 1,000 of them. Then he went to Yamamah, killed 50 men of Banu Numer and imprisoned 40.

The inhabitants of Yamamah began to fight against Bagha Kabeer he killed 1,500 of them in several encounters and skirmishes. The flame of fighting had hardly dimmed when Wathiq Billah sent another Turk commander with a fresh army to reinforce him. Bagha Kabeer then ordered a general massacre all over Yamamah. When they fled, he pursued them until Yemen and killed thousands of them. In short, after badly mauling and humiliating the Arab tribes he arrested 2,000 Arab noble men and brought them to Baghdad.

After arriving in Baghdad, he wrote to Mohammad bin Saleh to bring

all the captives he had put in jail in Madinah to Baghdad. He gathered all the prisoners he had captured on the expedition and brought all of them to Baghdad where they were put in jail. In this way, Bagha Kabeer had the Arabs killed mercilessly and humiliated and subdued in various ways by Turks over a two-year period.

Abdullah bin Tahir, the ruler of Khorasan, died in 230 A.H. Caliph Wathiq Billah retained Tahir's son as the ruler of Khorasan, Kerman, Tabristan and Rayy in accordance with Abdullah bin Tahir's will.

### **Ahmad bin Nasr's Revolt and Death**

Ahmad bin Nasr bin Malik bin Haitham Khazai's grand father Malik bin Khazai was one of the deputies of the propagation of the Abbasids cause. Ahmed bin Nasr used to live in the company of the scholars of Hadith and was counted among them. He was opposed to the issue of the Quran's creation that was why a large group of people took the oath at his hands against the Caliphate of the Abbasids. He revolted in Baghdad on Wednesday night 3 Shaban 231 A.H. and beat the war drums. The Baghdad Police swung into action and arrested him very tactfully.

Ahmad bin Nasr and his men were sent to Wathiq Billah as captives. Wathiq killed Nasr with his own hands. He cut off his head and sent his body to Baghdad. The body was hung on the gate of Baghdad and his head on the clock tower of Baghdad. A special guard was deputed with instructions that he should not let the face be pointed towards the Qiblah (direction of prayer). A sign was hung from his ear with the words: "This is Ahmad bin Nasr bin Malik's head whom the Caliph invited to accept the faith of Qur'ân's creation but he declined. Then Allâh quickly invited him to the fire of Hell." Ahmad bin Nasr's murder took place earlier than Abu Abdur Rahman Abdullah bin Mohammad Azdi's experience with the Caliph, which has been mentioned above.

### **The Exchange Prisoners of War with the Romans**

The chain of battles with the Romans had been going on continuously. The Muslims continued to defeat the Romans and at times, they

reached Constantinople. However, the Roman Empire could not be destroyed. During the period of the rightly guided Caliphs, the Iranian empire was totally annihilated but the Roman Empire survived. Although Syria, Palestine, and Egypt were taken from the Romans and no stone was left unturned by the Muslims to capture Constantinople and enter Europe, civil wars among the Muslims started and Constantinople and Europe were spared from being overrun by the hooves of the Muslims' horses. The series of these internal struggles continued in such a way that they did not appear to have an end and none of the Caliphs had a chance and the time necessary to concentrate all their power on Europe nor was any of them able to stop the rebellions and uprisings in the Islamic territories.

In short, the internal bickering of the Muslims saved the Roman Emperor in Constantinople and the other European countries. The skirmishes between the Muslims and the Christians along the borders continued. Sometimes a Caliph invaded the Romans and returned to the capital after threatening and punishing them but it was never possible for him to be away from his capital for an extended period of time. Even during Wathiq Billah's regime skirmishes with the Romans went on. During Caliph Haroon Rasheed's time, the exchange of the Christian and Muslim prisoners took place twice. The exchange had taken place on the bank of the river Lams and on 10 Muharram 231 A.H. during Wathiq Billah's regime it took place there for a third time. The procedure adopted was as follows: Two bridges across the river were constructed in parallel. On one bridge, the Christian prisoners crossed over and on the other bridge the Muslim prisoners crossed from the other side. This was done to insure that the number of Muslims released equaled the number of Christians released. Wathiq Billah sent Khaqan on his behalf to the riverbank along with the Christian prisoners. When an equal number of prisoners were exchanged and all the Muslim prisoners numbering 4,600 were released, there still remained many Roman prisoners in the Muslims custody.

Saying, "In this exchange we should have the upper hand and this is a type of obligation on the Romans from us," Khaqan then set the remaining Roman prisoners free.

## **The death of Wathiq Billah**

Wathiq Billah came to suffer from dropsy. His whole body swelled up. He was made to sit on a hot oven. This improved his condition. The next day the oven was heated a bit more and he sat for a longer period, which caused fever. They took him out and put him on a litter for a tour. When it was put down, they found him dead. Immediately members of the government Qadi Ahmad bin Dawood, Muhammad bin Abdul Malik Prime Minister Itakh, Waseef and Umar bin Farah assembled at the Caliph's palace and decided to enthrone Mohammad bin Wathiq Billah, a young boy of 9 years. At that moment Waseef addressed them saying, "Don't you fear Allāh making such a young boy Caliph?"

Hearing these words, they realized their mistake. They stopped and began to discuss who was the most deserving man. At last, Wathiq Billah's brother Jafar bin Motasim was called made to put on the royal robe and sit on the throne of the Caliphate. He was given the title Motawakkil Alallāh, Motawakkil Alallāh took the oath for Caliphate from all, led the funeral prayer and ordered the burial.

Wathiq Billah was buried in Hadi palace. He ruled for 5 years and 9 months. He died on Tuesday 24 Thul Hijjah 232 A.H. at the age of 36. He was very firm and forbearing. However, he committed excesses regarding the issue of the Qur'an's creation. He was cured of this craze at the end of his life.

Note: Caliph Wathiq's body was left alone after death and everyone was busy taking the oath from Motawakkil Alallāh's hands while an animal came ate his eyes out of his head.

## **Motawakkil Alallāh**

Motawakkil Alallāh bin Motasim Billah bin Haroon Rasheed's real name was Jafar. His kunya was Abul Fadl. He was born of a slave-girl named Shuja. He ascended the throne after Wathiq's death on 24 Thul Hijjah 232 A.H. Immediately after becoming Caliph he disbursed salaries for 8 months to the army and made his son Muntasir the ruler of Hijaz, Yemen and Taif.



## **Mohammad bin Abdul Malik's Deposition and Death**

Mohammad bin Abdul Malik Zayyat had been Prime Minister since Motasim's times. Even during Wathiq Billah's regime, he continued in that post. During Motawakkil Alallāh's Caliphate, he remained Prime Minister and then he was deposed and punished.

The following are the details: During his Caliphate, Wathiq Billah was displeased with his brother Motawakkil Alallāh. Motawakkil Alallāh went to Prime Minister Mohammad bin Abdul Malik and requested him to recommend him to the Amīr al-Mumīnin and improve his standing with him. Due to his long term of office, the Prime Minister he had grown a bit arrogant, ill tempered and unbalanced. He paid little attention to Motawakkil Alallāh and treated him discourteously and said to him "Mend your ways and the Amīr al-Mumīnin will automatically be pleased with you and no recommendation is needed." After that, he complained to Wathiq Billah against him saying, "He came to me for a recommendation to you. When I saw his hair growing like a woman, I did not talk to him." Wathiq called Motawakkil Alallāh to the court, had his hair cut and turned him out of the court. The engineer of this humiliation was Mohammad bin Abdul Malik, Motawakkil Alallāh after two months of his assuming power, ordered Itakh to arrest Mohammad bin Abdul Malik at home and send the message to all the occupied countries that all his property and goods wherever they were should be confiscated. In compliance with the order, Itakh imprisoned him, had his goods brought to Baghdad and deposited them in the royal treasury. Mohammad bin Abdul Malik could not stand the rigors of captivity and died on 15 Rabi-al-Awwal 233 A.H. in that state. Omar bin Farah was also arrested and imprisoned like him in Ramadan 233 A.H. but was later released on payment of 1,100,000 dirhams.

## **Itakh's arrest and death**

Itakh was a Turk slave. In his early years, he lived with Salam bin Abras and served as a cook and that is why he was known as Itakh Tabbakh (the cook). Finding him wise, well-mannered, strong-bodied and handsome Caliph Motasim purchased him from Salam Abras in

199 A.H. As he was discerning and clever, he kept rising in rank. During Motasim's regime, his respect and power increased many fold. Those from the royal family accused of a crime were generally imprisoned in his house and put under his surveillance. Ajeef, Mamoon Rasheed's descendants, Mohammad bin Abdul Malik and Omar bin Farah were kept as prisoners and killed under his charge. He was also in charge of defense, surveillance and delegations. He left for Hajj in Dhul Qadah 234 A.H. After his departure, Motawakkil appointed his servant Waseef to the post of surveillance. When he returned from Hajj and reached near Baghdad, Ishaq bin Ibrahim at the insistence of Caliph Motawakkil invited him to Baghdad and then imprisoned him along with his two sons, Mansoor and Mozaffar. Itakh died in captivity and his two sons remained in prison until the end of Motawakkil's Caliphate. When Muntasir ascended the throne, he released them.

### **The Oath for Succession**

In 235 A.H., Mohammad bin Bayee bin Jalees revolted in Azerbaijan however, it was soon crushed by Bagha Kabeer. The same year Caliph Motawakkil took the oath from the people for the succession of his sons Mohammad, Talha and Ibrahim and declared that first Mohammad would be the Caliph followed by Talha. He gave titles of Muntasir and Motaz to Mohammad and Talha respectively. The western countries were given to Mohammad and the eastern countries to Motaz as landed estates. Later on, they were made successors to the throne and Syria was given to them as a landed estate.

The same year, Caliph Motawakkil changed the uniforms of the army and woolen coats were ordered to be used by tying them with a cord instead of the belt used formerly. The Dhimmis were restrained from constructing new places of worship. Instructions were issued in all the territories that no one should approach any government officials for financial help. The Christian Dhimmis were ordered not to hang the cross at their conferences. The same year Hasan bin Sahal and Ishaq bin Ibrahim bin Hasan bin Mus'ab, the nephew of Tahir bin Husain who had been the Baghdad Chief of Police since Mamoon Rasheed's regime died. Motawakkil made Mohammad bin Ishaq the Chief of Police. He gave him the governorship of the province of Iran. It should be kept in mind that the Province of Iran was separate from Khorasan.

The governership of Khorasan along with that of Tabristan was under the control of Tahir bin Abdullah Tahir bin Husain. The same year Caliph Motawakkil issued the decree that all the Christians should wear a scarf. The necktie is probably the memorial of this. In 236 A.H., he restrained the people from visiting the grave of Imam Husain and the constructions around it were demolished. The same year Obaidullah bin Yahya bin Khaqan was given the post of the Prime Minister.

### **Revolt in Armenia**

The province of Armenia was governed by Yusuf bin Mohammad. Buqra bin Aswat, a prelate and the head of the prelates visited the governor's headquarters and begged Yusuf bin Mohammad for security. Yusuf arrested him along with his sons and sent them to Caliph Motawakkil. This caused great resentment among the prelates of Armenia against Yusuf. Buqrat bin Aswat's son-in-law Musa bin Zurara assembled them and sought their opinions. All swore that they would kill Yusuf bin Mohammad. Then under Musa bin Zurara's command, the Christians revolted. Yusuf bin Mohammad came out to fight. The rebels killed him and his men in Ramadan 237 A.H. Hearing this news, Motawakkil sent Bagha Kabeer to Armenia. Bagha Kabeer passed through Mousil and Jazirah, encamped at Arzan and conquered it. He killed 30,000 of Musa bin Zurara's men and also captured a large number. After that in 238 A.H., he picked up the rebellious prelates, punished them and sent them to Baghdad.

### **Qadi Ahmad bin Abi Dawood's Deposition and Death**

Qadi Ahmad bin Abi Dawood commanded greater influence and power than the Prime Minister during Wathiq Billah's regime. The status quo was maintained during the initial period of Motawakkil. Caliph Motawakkil became displeased with Qadi Ahmad bin Dawood in 237 A.H. and ordered the confiscation of his goods, property and estates. Qadi Ahmad's son Abul Waleed sold his goods and property for 160,000 dirhams and presented the same to the Caliph. Motawakkil deposed and jailed Qadi Ahmad and gave the post of Chief Justice to Yahya bin Aktham.

Qadi Ahmad suffered from paralysis at that time. Qadi Yahya bin

Aktham was also dismissed by Motawakkil in 240 A.H. and Ahmad bin Abi Dawood died the same year 237 A.H. 20 days after his son Abul Waleed's death. The same year the Christians in Hims took up arms, removed their ruler and captured the city. Caliph Motawakkil ordered the armies of Damascus and Ramla to move on Hims. These armies quelled the rebellion of the Christians and they exiled many of them. The same year Motawakkil dismissed Qadi Abu Bakr bin Mohammad bin Abul Laith of Egypt and had him lashed. He appointed Imam Malik's disciple Harith bin Miskeen as Chief Justice of Egypt. Then the Caliph made Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir bin Husain bin Mus'ab Chief of the Baghdad Police while his brother Tahir bin Abdullah bin Tahir was made the governor of Khorasan.

### **The Roman Invasion**

In 238 A.H. the governor of Egypt Ambasa bin Ishaq, called the army stationed along the coast of Dimyat to Egypt for some engagement. Finding the place unprotected, the Romans with a fleet of 100 ships looted Dimyat completely. They burned down the Central Mosque, looted the city's goods and put captives on their ships and sailed to Tunis. They repeated the same there also. Ali bin Yahya Armini invaded the Roman Empire with the help of the army of Saifah and captured many Christians. In 241 A.H., the Roman empress Nadurah wanted to convert the Muslim captives to Christianity. Those who refused were killed. Many converted to Christianity out of fear of death. Then the Queen requested Motawakkil to exchange the prisoners. Motawakkil sent his servant Saif with the Qadi of Baghdad Jafar bin Abdul Wahid to accompany the Christian prisoners. The exchange of the Muslim and Christian prisoners took place at the river Lams.

### **Invasion on the Roman Empire**

After the above exchange of prisoners the Romans again committed a breach of treaty. They led a surprise attack and took away many Muslims as captives. The Muslim commanders chased the Romans but returned disappointed.

Caliph Motawakkil sent Ali bin Yahya along with the army of Saifa to declare Jihad on the Roman Empire. The Caliph left the capital and

went to Damascus. He encamped there and was busy sending armies against the Romans and making the expedition a success. All members of the government accompanied the Caliph to Damascus. All the royal offices were also shifted there because the Caliph was inclined to stay there permanently.

Hardly two months had passed since the Caliph's arrival in Damascus when an epidemic broke out and he had to return to the capital. Before leaving, he sent a big army under Bagha Kabeer's command to attack the Roman Empire. Bagha Kabeer entered Roman territory and ordered a general massacre. He conquered many forts and did not hesitate killing and capturing the Romans.

When the Romans surrendered and begged for amnesty, Bagha Kabeer pulled back at the Caliph's instance. The Romans violated the agreement again in 245 A.H. and they looted some Muslim cities. Ali bin Yahya attacked the Romans in retaliation, and looted them significantly. In 246 A.H., the Romans again harassed the Muslims. They looted the border territories and desolated them. This time Caliph Motawakkil deputed land and navy forces to lead a multi-pronged attack on the Roman territories. This caused a major upheaval there. The Romans again begged for amnesty and expressed their will for reconciliation. The Muslims conceded to it willingly and again prisoners were exchanged at the Lams River. This time, in 246 A.H., 2,300 Muslim prisoners were recovered.

### **The Building of the City of Jafaria**

In 245 A.H., Motawakkil had a new city named Jafaria built at the cost of 200,000 dinars not including a big palace in the center of the city called Luloo (pearl). It was taller than all the royal palaces. Some called it Jafaria, some Motawakkilia and yet some Makhoorah. Jafar bin Khayyat died the same year. In this year, Motawakkil had Najah bin Maslama beaten to death. He was a very influential man. He was the executive of the office of Motawakkil's official proclamations. The charge of bribery was proved against him and he suffered this severe punishment.

## **The Murder of Motawakkil**

As has been mentioned above, Motawakkil had made his son Muntasir heir apparent. Muntasir was greatly influenced by the Shiites and believed in the creation of the Quran as did Wathiq and Motasim before him. But Motawakkil was a strict follower of Sunnah, a great adviser of the scholars of the Sunnah and a formidable critic on the issue of the Qur'an's creation. He always remained engaged in putting an end to this problem with great courage. This difference of belief between the father and the son led to an estrangement. Motawakkil made up his mind to make his second son Motaz his heir-apparent. As Muntasir and Motaz were born of two different women, there already existed a rivalry between them. When Caliph Motawakkil preferred Motaz to Muntasir, the latter turned inimical to his father.

A few days before this Caliph Motawakkil had become angry with his Turk commanders Bagha Kabeer, Waseef Kabeer, Waseef Sagheer and Dawajan Ashrosani for some of their activities and seized their estates, the Turks were displeased with him. Though Bagha Kabeer was sent to the Roman territories, his son Musa bin Bagha was assigned to protect the royal palace.

When Bagha Kabeer found that Muntasir agreed to his views, he organized a group including his four sons and a few Turks and assigned them the task of murdering Motawakkil. One night when Muntasir and the other courtiers left the court and the Caliph remained with Fatah bin Khaqan and four other companions, the killers entered the royal palace by the door facing the Tigris River and attacked the Caliph. Fatah bin Khaqan was also killed with him. Leaving the two dead bodies, the killers with their blood-stained swords reached Muntasir the same night and congratulated him on becoming the Caliph. Muntasir immediately went to the royal palace and took the oath from the people. Waseef and other Turk chiefs came and took the oath. When this news reached the minister Obaidullah bin Yahya bin Khaqan, he rushed to Motaz but Muntasir had already called Motaz to him and taken the oath from him. When the minister Obaidullah called on Motaz, 10,000 people including Azdi, Armeni and non-Arabs assembled there. They said to

him in one voice, "If you permit us, we shall kill Muntasir and his men." Obaidullah stopped them. The next morning Muntasir ordered Motawakkil and Fatah to be buried. This happened on 4 Shawwal 247 A.H. Caliph Motawakkil was murdered after being Caliphate for 14 years 10 months and 3 days. He was 40.

### **Motawakkil's Habits and Nature and a Few Important Incidents**

Immediately after assuming power, Caliph Motawakkil Alallah showed his interest and inclination towards the revival of the Sunnah. In 234 A.H., he invited all the scholars of Hadith to the capital Samarra and accorded them great honor. Before this during Wathuq and Motasim's regimes, they could not deliver lectures on Hadith in public and could not narrate Hadith regarding the vision of Allāh. Motawakkil decreed them to teach Hadith at mosques freely and narrate Hadith about the attributes and vision of Allah. This pleased the Muslims and endeared him to them. Lessons on Hadiths began to be taught at the mosques. He put an end to the practice of grave worship. This made the Shiites his enemies because the rites performed at the grave of Imam Husain ؑ were stopped at once.

In 240 A.H., the inhabitants of Khalat heard such a loud sound from the sky that many people died from its impact. Hailstones, the size of chicken eggs, fell in Iraq and 13 villages sank into the earth. In 243 A.H., a severe tremor was felt in North Africa, Khorasan, Tabristan and Isfahan. Many mountains cracked and large numbers of people fell into the earth. Stones weighing 5 kg. fell on an Egyptian village. In Ramadan 243 A.H., the people of Halab (Aleppo) saw and heard a bird uttering, "O people fear Allāh" followed by "Allāh!" "Allāh" 40 times. Then it flew away. The next day the same thing happened. They informed the people in the capital and 500 people witnessed it. In 245 A.H., earthquakes took place in the whole world; many cities and forts fell to the ground; a mountain in Antakia fell into the ocean; the water in the springs of Makkah disappeared. Motawakkil spent 1,000,000 dinars to bring water from Arafat. Terrible sounds from the sky were heard.

Motawakkil was very generous. He gave more awards to the poets than any other Caliph had ever given. It was during his regime that Dhun Nun Misri appeared. When the Egyptian governor called on Thul Nun Misri and enquired about his faith, he was satisfied and wrote accordingly to Motawakkil. Motawakkil called him to the capital and was very pleased with him. He respected him much. After Motawakkil's murder somebody saw him in a dream and asked, "What has Allāh done with you?" Motawakkil said, "Allāh forgave me for whatever little I could do for the revival of the Sunnah." When he ascended the throne, the people thought about a suitable title for him. There was no agreement on it but when Motawakkil narrated his dream, all of them liked the title Motawakkil Alallah.'

Once Motawakkil called the scholars to his palace including Ahmad bin Madal. When all the scholars had arrived, Motawakkil also came, seeing him approaching all the scholars stood up to show respect except Ahmad bin Madal who remained sitting. Motawakkil said to his minister Obaidullah "Has this gentlemen not taken the oath?" Obaidullah said, "He has taken the oath but his eyesight is poor." Ahmed bin Madal at once said, "There is no defect in my eyes but I want to protect you from Allāh's punishment for a Hadith says: 'Whosoever expects that people should stand up respect him he should make his accommodation in Hell.'" Hearing this Motawakkil moved near Ahmad bin Madal.

Yazid Mahlabi says: One day Motawakkil said to me, "The Caliphs were strict with their subjects in order to keep them in awe. But I treat my subjects kindly so that they may obey me by recognizing my Caliphate." Amr bin Sheban says: I saw Motawakkil in a dream two months after he was murdered. I said to him, "What did Allāh do with you? Motawakkil said, 'Allāh forgave me for what I did for the revival of the Sunnah.' Then I said to him, 'What will happen to your killers?' He said, 'I have been awaiting my son Muhammad (Muntasir). When he comes I shall complain to Allāh against him.'" Caliph Motawakkil Alallah followed the Shafii school of thought and he was the first among the Caliphs to embrace this school of jurisprudence.



### **Mustansir Billah**

Mustansir Billah bin Motawakkil Alallah bin Motasim Billah bin Haroon Rasheed's real name was Mohammad and his kunya was Abu Jafar or Abu Abdullah. He was born of a Roman African slave at Samarra in 223 A.H. After having his father Motawakkil killed, he sat on the throne on 4 Shawwal 247 A.H. He deposed both his brothers Motaz and Muayyad, who had been made heirs apparent by his father Motawakkil.

The Turks had been dominating the Caliph's court and their power was increasing day by day. They had the upper hand in all affairs. Seeing the Turks were on the ascendant and they might be harmful to him, he geared up to curtail and reduce their powers and influence.

During his six-month Caliphate, he served the Shiites considerably. He allowed them to pay visits to Imam Husain's grave and granted all type of freedom to the Alawiites. Immediately after taking over the Caliphate, he made Ahmad bin Khaseeb the prime minister and made Bagha Kabeer the commander-in-chief. It was Bagha Kabeer and the other Turks who coaxed him to remove his brothers from succession. When he wanted to reduce their power, they were scared of him because he was wise and brave and they were sure he would succeed in his aim. Therefore, they gave his physician Ibn Taifoor 30,000 dinars as a bribe to use a poisoned scalpel while letting his blood in connection with curing a disease this led to his death.

After being Caliph less than 6 months, he died on 5 Rabi-al-Awwal 248 A.H. At the point of death he said, "O my mother! I have lost both this world and the hereafter. I have killed my father and now I am going after him."

### **Mustayeen Billah**

Mustayeen Billah bin Motasim bin Haroon Rasheed's real name was Ahmad and his kunya was Abul Abbas. He was handsome and fair complexioned. His face was pock marked and he stammered. He was born of a slave-girl named Makhariq in 221 A.H. When Muntasir died the members of the government assembled to decide on who should

be chosen Caliph. Motawakkil's sons Motaz and Moayyad were present but the Turks were wary of them because they were responsible for their removal from succession. Motasim Billah's son Ahmad was enthroned and the title Mustayeen Billah was chosen for him. He was very noble, very eloquent and a literary scholar. He sat on the throne on 6 Rabia Akhir 248 A.H.

When Mustayeen Billah was being taken to the royal palace for enthronement Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir and the masses protested, revolted and presented Motaz's claim to the Caliphate. The Turks fought with them and many were killed and many escaped. While the fight was going on the Turks were taking the oath for Mustayeen Billah's Caliphate. When the uproar subsided, awards and posts began to be distributed. The message was sent to Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir to come and take the oath, which he did. After the completion of the oath news arrived that Tahir bin Abdullah bin Tahir, the governor of Khorasan, passed away. Caliph Mustayeen Billah appointed Mohammad bin Tahir bin Abdullah as governor there. His uncle Talha and his son Mansoor were made rulers of Nishapur, and Sarkhas and Khwarzam respectively. Then his uncle Sulaiman bin Abdullah and his cousin Abbas were sent as rulers to Tabristan and Jurjan and Talqan respectively.

In 248 A.H., Abdullah bin Yahya bin Khaqan sought permission to perform Hajj. The Caliph permitted him but immediately after his departure he assigned a commander named Abdullah bin Yahya to arrest and exile him. He caught and exiled him to Riqqah accordingly. During the same period, the Turks wanted to murder Motaz and Moayyad. Ahmad bin Khaseeb stopped the Caliph from committing this illegal act. Immediately after sitting on the throne as Caliph, Mustayeen made a Turk chief Atamish his prime minister and Ahmad bin Khaseeb his deputy. The Caliph put Motaz and Moayyad under house arrest. After a short time Ahmad bin Khaseeb was also deposed and put under surveillance. Besides becoming prime minister, Atamish was also made the ruler of Egypt and the western territories. Bagha Sagheer was made the governor of Halwan and Masabzan. Similarly, Ashnas was appointed commander in chief and put in charge of all government staff. In short, all the important posts were given to the Turks.

In 249 A.H., the Romans launched an attack on the Islamic territories. Two reputed chiefs Omar bin Abdullah and Yahya bin Yahya besides many other Muslims were martyred in the encounter.

The Baghdad people were extremely shocked about the martyrdom of these two leaders and they all started complaining about the Turks that after getting power they not only killed the Caliphs and humiliated the noblemen but also neglected to declare Jihad against the infidels. That was why the two servants of Islam met their martyrdom and the Romans felt encouraged to attack the Muslims.

These and other issues led to the rise of unrest in Baghdad and the people began to make preparations for Jihad. In other words the common people were not waiting for the military leaders and the armed forces to address the problem of the Romans they themselves formed an army for the Jihad. The Muslims from all around began to come and join the Jihad and the wealthy Muslims contributed the money necessary and a huge army left Baghdad to fight in the holy war against the Romans. Mustayeen and the members of his government remained in Samarra as spectators and did not intervene. The Muslims who came out for Jihad reached Samarra and created trouble there. They broke open the jail and set the prisoners free. After that, the Turk chiefs Bagha, Waseef and Atamish faced these Muslims fighters with their armies. A large number of people were killed and their enthusiasm dissipated. Because Atamish had a greater hold on power and was able to utilize the royal treasury, Bagha and Waseef had enmity for him.

After Atamish, they had Abdullah bin Mohammad bin Ali made prime minister. After a short time there developed bad blood between Bagha Sagheer and Abdullah bin Mohammad bin Ali. Abdullah left Samarra out of fear of Bagha Sagheer. The Caliph appointed Mohammad bin Fadal Jurjani as the prime minister. Caliph Mustayeen was totally under the control of the Turks. Samarra was populated mostly by Turks and the Caliph was unable to get out of their control. In this situation Yahya bin Omar bin Yahya bin Husain bin Zaid Shaheed, whose kunya was Abul Husain, revolted in Kufa. Kufa was ruled over by Ayyub bin Husain bin Musa bin Sulaiman bin Ali on behalf of Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir. Abul Husain forced Ayyub out of Kufa, looted the royal treasury and occupied Kufa.

Abul Husain then left Kufa and marched towards Wasit. Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir sent Husain bin Ismail bin Ibrahim bin Husain bin Mus'ab to defeat him. The confrontation took place midway to Wasit. Abul Husain defeated Husain bin Ismail and returned to Kufa. The inhabitants of Baghdad also were ready to help Husain bin Ismail, who rallied his forces and attacked Abul Husain Yahya bin Omar. Yahya came out of Kufa and fought. After a fierce battle, Abul Husain was killed and his head was severed and sent to Caliph Mustayeen at Samarra. He put it into a box and kept it in the arsenal. Abul Husain Yahya lost his life on 15 Rajab 250 A.H.

As reward for his victory over Abul Husain, Caliph Mustayeen granted estates to Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir in Tabristan. One of the estates was near the border of Delam. When Mohammad bin Abdullah's ruler went to take possession, a man named Rustam opposed him. The inhabitants of Delam sided with Rustam and his two sons Mohammad and Jafar. At that time, Mohammad bin Ibrahim Alawi was present in Tabristan.

Mohammad and Jafar called on him and said, "Please stake your claim to the caliphate. We shall help you." He said, "Go to Rayy and put this request to Hasan bin Zaid bin Mohammad bin Ismail bin Hasan bin Zaid bin Hasan Sibti. He is my chief and leader." Mohammad and Jafar went to their father and briefed him about the meeting. He sent a man to Rayy. Hasan bin Zaid came to Tabristan. The people from Delam and Darban began to come and take the oath. A huge crowd collected and Hasan bin Zaid captured Tabristan, which was followed by Rayy.

Receiving this news, Mustayeen sent an army to defend Hamadan. It suffered defeat. Then Musa bin Bagha Kabeer was sent from the capital with an army. He took Tabristan from Hasan bin Zaid's control but Delam still remained under Hasan's control. Musa returned to Rayy. During those days, Caliph Mustayeen appointed Daleel bin Yaqub a Christian as his minister. After a short time, a Turk named Baghar developed a grievance against Daleel Christian. Bagha Sagheer and Waseef declared Baghar guilty in the matter. The Caliph jailed him. The Turks created an uproar and Bagha Sagheer had Baghar killed. This, far from quelling the uproar, aggravated it and

the entire city of Samarra took up arms. The flags of the insurgents were visible on all sides. Seeing the danger Caliph Mustayeen, Bagha Waseef, Shahik and Ahmad bin Saleh bin Shiraz left Samarra and went to Baghdad and lodged at Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir's house in Baghdad in Muharram 251 A.H. The royal offices and the whole staff followed the Caliph and went to Baghdad.

The Turks felt ashamed after the Caliph had left for Baghdad. Six Turks from Samarra called on him and entreated him saying, "Please come to Samarra. We are ashamed of our impertinent acts. We beg to be excused." Caliph Mustayeen reminded them of their disloyalties and impertinences and he refused to go to Samarra. The Turks returned to Samarra, took Motaz bin Motawakkil out of the jail and took the oath for his rule. Abu Ahmad bin Haroon Rasheed was also present there. When he was asked to take the oath, he said, "As I have taken the oath for Mustayeen and Motaz has accepted his dismissal from succession, I shall not take the oath."

Motaz left Abu Ahmad alone and did not insist on his taking the oath. Bagha Kabeer's sons Musa and Abdullah also took the oath for Motaz. Thus all those who preferred Motaz, came to Motaz at Samarra and those who preferred Mustayeen left Samarra and went to Baghdad.

The rulers and governors of the provinces also followed suit. Some joined the one and some the other. There were two Caliphs, one in Samarra and the other in Baghdad. The dynasty of Tahir and the Khorasanis were more on Mustayeen's side while all Turks and some other chiefs joined Motaz. The Caliphs continued fighting for 11 months. Both entered into correspondence with the governors of the provinces and tried to win their sympathy. This war was not confined to Samarra and Baghdad but spread to other provinces. However, the concentration was greater around Baghdad because the other areas were waiting to see the results from the capital.

Finally, in Thul Qadah 251 A.H. Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir, the commander of Mustayeen's army in Baghdad, launched such a

fierce attack on the Turks who were besieging Baghdad, that they were defeated and fled away. Bagha and Waseef were with Mustayeen in Baghdad. They also accompanied Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir with their small army of Turks consisting of men loyal to them and were part of Mustayeen's army.

When Bagha and Waseef saw the Turks defeated and fleeing from the Khorasanis and Iraqis, their national and racial prejudice received a jolt. They separated and joined the runaway army. The Turks became encouraged with their arrival, organized and ordered their armies to return and lay siege to Baghdad again.

In Baghdad, the civilians spread the rumor that Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir was deliberately putting Caliph Mustayeen into trouble which led to the loss of his enthusiasm for the struggle.

On 6 Muharram 252 A.H., Mustayeen Billah wrote to Motaz Billah recognizing his Caliphate and renouncing his own. Caliph Motaz then entered Baghdad, put the deposed Caliph under surveillance and sent him to Wasit. Mustayeen lived there under the custody of one of Motaz's commanders for 9 months then he came back to Samarra and was slain at Caliph Motaz's suggestion.

### **Motaz Billah**

Motaz Billah bin Motawakkil Alallah bin Motasim Billah bin Haroon Rasheed was born of a Roman slave girl named Fatahyah at Samarra in 232 A.H. He was made Caliph in Samarra in Muharram 251 A.H. After being at war with Mustayeen Billah for one year, he succeeded in forcing him to abdicate. He was very handsome. Ashnas the Turk died the same year he was enthroned. He had left 50,000 dinars, which were seized by Motaz Billah to run his administration. When Motaz Billah took the throne, he was 19. He made Ahmad bin Israil his minister and allowed Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir to continue as the chief of the Baghdad Police. Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir was the governor of Khorasan his deputy lived in Khorasan and he himself lived in Baghdad. It was the Turks who had enthroned Motaz and so he was under their influence. The Khorasanis and Iraqis were in the army, which was stationed in Baghdad and Mohammad

bin Abdullah used to pay their salaries.

Motaz Billah stopped their salaries and allowances. In Rajab 252 A.H., he deposed his brother Moayyad from the succession, sent him to jail and had him killed. In Ramadan 252 A.H., the army revolted because of not receiving their salaries and started to fight with Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir. Mohammad bin Abdullah quelled the rebellion with great difficulty. The same year saw a riot break out between the Turks and the Arabs starting a civil war. The inhabitants of Baghdad sided with the Arabs but the Turks succeeded fraudulently in killing and exiling the Arabs and their leaders.

The same year Caliph Motaz Billah appointed Husain bin Abi Shorab to the post of Chief Justice. The respect for the institution of the Caliphate had disappeared, the governors of different provinces began to consider themselves independent and the Khawarij and Alawiites began to revolt. Musawir bin Abdullah bin Musawir Bijli Khwarji captured Mousil and declared his independence and all the forces sent to fight him by the Caliph were defeated and chased away.

In 253 A.H., the Turks demanded their generals Waseef, Bagha and Simataweel, to pay four months salaries in advance. They told them that the treasury was empty and payment was not possible. The Turks grew restless and the generals informed Motaz Billah. Motaz Billah himself was helpless. The Turks caught Waseef and killed him. At that time, there was a rivalry between Babakyal and Bagha Sagheer. The Caliph showed greater favor for Babakyal. Bagha made up his mind to put the Caliph to death but Motaz Billah somehow found out and Babakyal's men did away with Bagha Sagheer.

### **Death of Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir**

Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir, the governor of Khorasan died in Baghdad in 253 A.H. Before his death, his will made his son Obaidullah his deputy and the governor of Khorasan. Obaidullah's brother Tahir bin Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir opposed him. They fell out regarding who should lead the funeral prayer. In light of the will, Obaidullah was declared to be his father's deputy. Later

Caliph Motaz Billah made another brother Sulaiman bin Abdullah bin Tahir the deputy of Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir and he made Baghdad his headquarters and began to discharge his duties and manage the expeditions.

### **Ahmad bin Tuloon**

Among the Turkish generals, Babakyal like Bagha, Waseef and Simataweel was a famous and popular leader. The same year Motaz Billah deputed Babakyal as the governor of Egypt. Babakyal deputed on his own behalf Ahmad bin Tuloon as the governor of Egypt.

Tuloon was a Turk who was captured in the battle of Farghana. He was brought up in the family of the Caliph and was counted as one of the royal slaves. His son Ahmad was brought up in the capital and was well versed in administrative affairs. When Babakyal became the governor of Egypt, he was considering that who he should assign as the governor of Egypt on his behalf. His advisors named Tuloon. He agreed and sent Tuloon to Egypt where he took over and managed the affairs there. Later, Caliph Mohtadi made the Turk Yarkooj the governor of Egypt who retained Ahmad bin Tuloon as his deputy in Egypt.

In this way Ahmad bin Tuloon gained a firm hold on Egypt as a ruler and his descendants ruled it by succession and minted their own coins there. In short, Egypt should be considered excluded from the Abbasid Caliphate from 253 A.H. or at least that the Tuloon government was founded in Egypt in 253 A.H.

### **Yaqub bin Laith Saffar**

Both Yaqub bin Laith and his brother Amr bin Laith owned shops making copper and brass utensils in Sajistan. There were revolts in several places following the weakening of the Caliphate and the Khwarij also revolted. The Alawiites supporters also came out against the Abbasids. One of them named Saleh bin Nasr Kanani took up arms. A group of the wealthy, noblemen and common masses collected around him. Yaqub bin Laith also joined them. Saleh fought and somehow captured Sajistan and forced the members of the Tahir dynasty out of Sajistan. Saleh died after this victory. Dirham bin Hasan followed as his successor. However, the governor of Khorasan



captured and sent him to Baghdad. Saleh's group chose Yaqub bin Laith as its Amir. Yaqub, by virtue of his prudence and valor, completed the capture of Sajistan and expelled Mohammad bin Abdullah bin Tahir's governor of Herat, Mohammad bin Aus Ambari and took over Herat. He then began to conquer the territories of Khorasan.

Meanwhile the governor of Iran, Ali bin Husain bin Shibil, wanted to conquer Kerman. Yaqub bin Laith also wanted control over Kerman. Yaqub bin Laith defeated and chased away Ali bin Husain's commanders and finally invaded and conquered Shiraz, the capital of Iran in 255 A.H. At once he went back to Sajistan and sent an application to the Caliph's court that read, "Great unrest was prevalent in this region. The people here have made me their Amir. I am obedient and loyal to Amir Al-Muminin." Gradually he removed the families of Tahir from Khorasan, occupied it and established his own permanent government. Tahir bin Husain's descendants had ruled over Khorasan continuously but they were always connected with the Caliph's court and one member of this family was always appointed to the administration of the Baghdad Police department.

None of the Abbasids wanted to take Khorasan from the Tahir family because they had always regarded themselves as the servants and subordinates of the Abbasid Caliphs so they continued to receive title to the governorship from them and in return, the Tahir family would pay the fixed taxes to the Caliph. However, the government which Yaqub bin Laith setup was different. It would become known as the Saffariah State and its details follow later on in the narrative.

### **Motaz Billah: Deposition and Death**

Caliph Motaz was completely under the control of the Turk generals and whatever they wanted he would do for them. The treasury had been drained because the generals had usurped it. The soldiers demanded the Caliph to pay their salaries. The Caliph was helpless. Finally, the Turks demanded payment or else they would kill Saleh bin Waseef who they considered responsible for manipulating the Caliph.

Saleh bin Waseef was a Turk general and the Caliph was afraid of him. Seeing the problem Motaz went to his Roman mother Fatahyah for some money to solve the problem. She had large sums of money

but she refused to part with any on the pretext of impending poverty. The Turks, in coalition with Saleh bin Waseef, Mohammad bin Bagha Sagheer and Babakyal, armed themselves fully and went to the door of the Caliph's palace and called Motaz. Caliph Motaz sent word, "I have taken medicine. I am too ill and weak to come out." Hearing this the Turks made a forced entry into the palace and brought out the Caliph dragging him by the legs. They beat him up, abused him and made him stand bareheaded in the sun in the courtyard. Then everybody who passed by slapped him in the face. When his humiliation went beyond limits, he was asked to abdicate. He refused. Then the chief judge Husain bin Abi Shorab and members of the government were called to witness the dismissal of the Caliph. All of them put their signatures on it and Motaz was thrown into a dungeon without food and water leading ultimately to his death. This occurred in Rajab 255 A.H. He died on 8 Shaban 255 A.H.

They brought Motaz's cousin Mohammad bin Wathiq from Baghdad and put him on the throne and bestowed on him the title of Mohtadi Billah. When Motaz's mother saw her son's arrest and humiliation, she escaped through a tunnel and went into hiding somewhere in Samarra. When Mohtadi became Caliph, she received amnesty from Saleh bin Waseef, the Caliph's deputy, and appeared in Ramadan 255 A.H. When Saleh initiated inquiries about her wealth it came to light that she was in possession of 10,300,000 dinars and gold and jewels worth more than that although Motaz had asked for only 50,000 dinars, a sum which would have been sufficient to put an end to the unrest in the army. Saleh seized all her wealth and goods and said, "This unlucky woman had her son killed for 50,000 dinars although she had millions of dinars in her possession." Then he sent her to Makkah. She lived there until Motamid succeeded to the throne. Then she went to Samarra where she died in 264 A.H.

### **Mohtadi Billah**

Mohtadi Billah bin Wathiq Billah bin Motasim Billah bin Haroon Rasheed's real name was Mohammad and his kunya was Abu Ishaq. He was born during his grandfather Motasim Billah's period of Caliphate in 218 A.H. He became Caliph on 29 Rajab 255 A.H. at the

age of 37. He was light brown in complexion, lean and thin, handsome, pious and devout, just and brave. He struggled considerably to uphold the divine commandments. Right from his accession to his death, he continuously observed the fast but he did not have any supporters. He came at such a bad time that it was difficult to restore the old Islamic honor and glory. Hashim bin Qasim says: During the month of Ramadan I was sitting near Mohtadi. It was evening. When I stood up to leave, he asked me to sit down. Then we broke the fast together and performed our prayer. When Mohtadi ordered supper, it was brought in a small willow basket. It contained thin loaves of bread, a pinch of salt in a cup, vinegar in another and olive oil in a third cup. He invited me to eat. I began to eat and thought that more food would follow so I ate slowly. Mohtadi looked at me and said, "Don't you observe the fast?" I said, "Yes" Then he said, "Will you not observe it tomorrow?" I said, "It is the month of Ramadan. Why shouldn't I observe it?" He said, "Then eat well and don't expect that more food will be coming for there is nothing here except this." I was taken by surprise and said, Amir al Muminin! "What is this? Allāh has given you all the delicacies, conveniences and comforts of life." He said, "Yes, that is true. However, when I reflected, I found that Omar bin Abdul Aziz among Banu Umayyah was reduced to a skeleton due to his under-eating and preoccupation with providing all facilities to his subjects. Then I turned my attention to my family and I was highly ashamed to find that we, the Banu Hashim, are quite unlike them. That is why I have adopted the way you see." He had put a strict ban on sports and entertainment, declared singing and playing musical instruments unlawful and prohibited the royal staff from being tyrannical to the people. In matters of administrative work, he was strict. He attended the court daily and handled the cases in open court. He used to do the accounting by having the accountants sit in front of him.

As has been recorded earlier, the Turks also made Mohtadi Billah Caliph. After enthroning him Saleh bin Wasif, the most influential among the Turks who dominated him most arrested and killed Ahmad bin Israil, Zaid bin Motaz Billah and Abu Nuh and confiscated their money and property. Then he arrested Hasan bin Mukhallad and seized his goods. When Caliph Mohtadi Billah came to know about

these incidents, he was extremely shocked and said, "Was their arrest for an ordinary crime that they were also killed?" Following that the Caliph turned all the slave-girls and singers out of Samarra. He ordered all pets to be killed and the dogs to be set free. He made Sulaiman bin Wahab his minister. But Saleh ibn Waseef, by virtue of his intelligence and careful planning, brought him under his control and began to rule himself. Musa bin Bagha was not present at the time of Motaz's deposition and Mohtadi's accession. He had been in Rayy. When he heard that Saleh had deposed Motaz and enthroned Mohtadi, he announced his intention of avenging Motaz's blood and marched to the capital. After he arrived, he sent a request to the Caliph for permission to come to him. Saleh went into hiding when he heard of Musa's arrival.

The Caliph permitted Musa to call on him. Soon after his arrival, he captured the Caliph. He then had him mounted on a mule and wanted to take him to the prison. Mohtadi said, "Musa! Fear Allâh, what is it that you want?" Musa said, "My intention is good. Please swear that you will not side with Saleh." The Caliph swore. Musa took the oath at his hands immediately. Then Musa began to search for Saleh. The Caliph tried to reconcile between Musa and Saleh. Consequently, Musa and his men suspected that the Caliph knew where Saleh was and that it was he who was concealing him. The Turks met at Musa bin Bagha's house for council, and thought of killing or deposing Caliph Mohtadi. The Caliph came to know about this meeting and sent for all of them to appear in his court. He himself came to the court armed and with a face that reflected great anger. He said to the Turks, "I have come to know about your council. Do not take me like other Caliphs. As long as I hold the sword in my hand, I will kill most of you. I have left my will and I am ready to kill and be killed. Remember that enmity with me will prove fatal to you. I declare on oath that I do not know where Saleh is." They were silent when they heard this and their conspiracy subsided. Then Musa proclaimed a 10,000 dinars reward for the capture of Saleh.

By chance, Saleh was located and Musa had him killed, then had his head put on a spear and taken throughout the city. Mohtadi disapproved of it but he could not do anything against the Turk's power. He was quite helpless. Finally, he wrote a letter to the Turk

chief named Babakyal asking him to kill Musa. Babakyal showed the letter to Musa. Musa rushed with his army to the Caliph's palace. The people of the western territories and Farghana defended the Caliph and a number of encounters took place.

Meanwhile Babakyal was put in Mohtadi's prison as a captive. Caliph Mohtadi had him killed and his head thrown over to the Turks side. This excited them even more and the Turks who were in the Caliph's army became angry at Babakyal's murder and went over to Musa's army. During this period the Turks had besieged the Caliph, the subjects of Baghdad, Samarra and other places that had been praying for Caliph Mohtadi as they were very pleased with his justice and generosity and thought of him as a righteous Caliph. However, the consequences were quite adverse. The Caliph was defeated. The Turks arrested him and had his testicles crushed until he died.

This tragedy occurred on 14 Rajab 256 A.H. Caliph Mohtadi ran his Caliphate for 15 days short of a year. He was 38 when he lost his life. After that, the Turks took Abul Abbas Ahmad bin Motawakkil out of captivity (he was in captivity at Josaq) and put him on the throne. They took the oath for him and chose Motamid Alallah as his title.

### **Motamid Alallah**

Motamid Alallah bin Motawakkil Alallah bin Motasim Billah bin Haroon Rasheed was born of a Roman slave girl named Fatyan. Caliph Motamid made Obaidullah bin Yahya bin Khaqan his minister. Obaidullah fell off his horse and died in 263 A.H. Then Mohammad bin Mukhallad was made the minister.

### **The Revolt of the Alawiites**

In 256 A.H. Ibrahim bin Mohammad bin Yahya bin Abdullah bin Mohammad bin Hanafia bin Ali bin Abi Talib alias Ibn Sufi and Ali bin Zaid Alawi revolted against the Abbasid Caliphate in Egypt and Kufa respectively. Ibn Sufi suffered defeat in several battles and fled from Egypt and went to Makkah where the governor of Makkah arrested him and sent him to Ahmad bin Tuloon in Egypt. He imprisoned him and later released him. After his release, he went to

Madinah where he died. Ali bin Zaid revolted in Kufa and expelled the governor and took it over. Caliph Motamid sent a commander named Shah bin Michael to Kufa but he was defeated by Ali bin Zaid. Then the Caliph sent another commander named Kajoor who defeated Ali bin Zaid. In 256 A.H. he re-attacked Ali bin Zaid which resulted in his defeat and arrest. Kajoor went to the capital with him. Husain bin Zaid Alawi captured Rayy and Musa bin Bagha set out to fight against him.

A man named Ali posing as an Alawiite previously drew the people's attention to himself in Bahrain and then went to Ahsa. There he posed as an Alawiite but with a different lineage. As the Alawiites were revolting in different places, he had a strong craving for power and kept drawing people's attention to himself by posing as an Alawiite but his lineage continued to be questioned everywhere proving that he was not an Alawiite. At last, in coalition with a few slaves in Baghdad he went to Basra and announced to the slaves that whoever came over to him would be freed. It attracted many of them and they rallied around him. When the masters of the slaves came to him and wanted to talk about them, he had them arrested and later Ali released them.

The number of slaves continued multiplying under Ali's flag and he with fiery speeches coaxed and induced them to conquer territory with the power of their swords. Then he looted Qadsiya and its adjoining areas and returned to Basra. The people of Basra fought but were defeated. Following that, they fought with him several times but were defeated each time.

The slave army captured Basra. The Caliph deputed the Turk Abu Bilal with a 4,000 man army under his command to confront them. The confrontation took place near the river Riyan. The slaves defeated and chased them away. They captured not only Basra but also, Ahwaz and other places. The Turk leaders brought armies from the Caliph's court repeatedly but always returned defeated. Finally, it was Sayeed bin Saleh who crushed them and expelled them from Basra. However, on 15 Shawwal 257 A.H. they recaptured Basra and burnt it to the ground. The beautiful buildings of Basra were reduced to ashes and rubble.

Assessing the situation Caliph Motamid sent Mohammad Maroof alias Molid with a large army. The slaves came out of Basra and fought with him at the Maqul River. They put Molid's army to rout,

looted their goods and killed the fleeing soldiers. Then they returned to the Maqul River. Then the Caliph deputed Mansoor bin Jafar Khayyat to tackle the problem. They came to fight under the command of their chief Ali bin Aban. There was a fierce battle. Swords dazzled until noon finally, Mansoor bin Jafar was defeated and killed.

Hearing the news, Caliph Motamid Billah recalled his brother Abu Ahmad Muwaffaq, whom he had deputed as the governor of Makkah, gave him the governorship of Egypt, Qansareen and Awasim and ordered him to fight against the slaves. Then he gave another army to Mufleh and sent him to fight them also. These two armies marched to face the slave army.

In the battle that followed, Mufleh was killed and his men began to flee. This caused anxiety and disintegration among Muwaffaq's men. At last, Muwaffaq dodged the enemy and saved his army, reorganized them, came to the Abu Khaseeb River and fought with the slaves, defeated them and captured many of them he also freed many of his men from their captivity and returned to Samarra. That defeat did not crush them completely. They rallied again and started looting, killing and plundering. They continued on their looting and killing spree in Basra and Iraq until 270 A.H.

### **Yaqub bin Laith's Governorship**

In 256 A.H., the very first year of Motamid's accession Mohammad bin Wasil bin Ibrahim Tamimi, an Iraqi Arab living in Iran for many years, conspired with some Kurds and killed the governor of Iran, Harith bin Seema and captured it. When Yaqub bin Laith Saffar found out, he invaded Iran. Muwaffaq thought it wise to save Iran from going under Yaqub Saffar's control so he had the letters of governorship for Takharistan and Balkh in Yaqub's name written by Motamid and sent to Yaqub bin Laith with the message: "Give up the thought of Iran and establish your government in Balkh and Takharistan." Yaqub bin Laith liked the idea and he made proper arrangements for Balkh and Takharistan, reached Kabul and arrested Ratbeel. Then he dispatched gifts to the Caliph.

He visited Sajistan and began to take control of the cities of Herat and Khorasan. In 259 A.H., he captured Khorasan and expelled all the

members of the Tahir family. Caliph Motamid wrote him a threatening letter saying, "Be content with the cities and the governorship of that which has been given to you. Don't capture Khorasan." But Yaqub did not pay any heed to this warning. In 260 A.H., Hasan bin Zaid Alawi took an army from Delam and invaded Yaqub. In a fierce battle Hasan bin Zaid suffered defeat and returned to Delam and Yaqub conquered Sarya and Amul then he turned to Sajistan.

### **The Rebellion in Mousil**

Motamid deputed the Turk commander Satgeen as the governor of Mousil. The Turks started perpetrating atrocities on the inhabitants of Mousil. As a consequence of this abuse, they made Yahya bin Sulaiman their leader, beat the Turks and expelled them.

The Caliph was informed of the rebellion. Turk armies were sent. Bloody battles were waged but the result was disastrous. The Caliph's army of Turks lost and Sulaiman bin Yahya's government was established in Mousil. This happened in 260-61 A.H.

### **Ibn Mufleh, Ibn Wasil, Ibn Laith Saffar**

When Yaqub bin Laith invaded Iran to snatch it from Mohammad bin Wasil in 256 A.H. the Caliph bestowed on him the governorship of Balkh and Takharistan and sent him back. Then he sent Abdur Rahman bin Mufleh with an army to win the province of Iran from Mohammad bin Wasil. Abdur Rahman and Mohammad began to fight.

The Caliph deputed the Turk commander Tashtamar to reinforce Abdur Rahman bin Mufleh. Tashtamar was killed and in 262 A.H. Mohammad bin Wasil captured Abdur Rahman bin Mufleh. Caliph Motamid began to correspond with Mohammad bin Wasil and initiated a move to liberate Abdur Rahman bin Mufleh. Mohammad bin Wasil did not reply to his letters but killed Abdur Rahman bin Mufleh and began to prepare to invade the city of Wasit where Musa bin Bagha was stationed with his army. When Mohammad bin Wasil proceeded towards Wasit, Ibrahim bin Seema blocked his way.

From the opposite side Abu Saj who was made governor of Iran by the Caliph sent his son-in-law Abdur Rahman to fight against



Muhammad bin Wasil and conquer Iran. Abu Saj was engaged in dealing with the slaves who had made more trouble in Basra and the surrounding area. When Abu Saj's son-in-law Abdur Rahman set out with the army, he came across the slaves' leader Ali bin Aban on the way. Ali bin Aban defeated and killed Abdur Rahman. Mohammad bin Wasil and his army were ready to confront Ibrahim Seema at Ahwaz. In the meantime, news arrived that Yaqub bin Laith Saffar invaded Faras, so Muhammad Wasil Tamimi, ended the confrontation with Ibrahim Seema and returned to Iran. Finally, Saffar and Mohammad bin Wasil fought. Ibn Wasil lost and escaped and Yaqub Saffar captured Iran. Khorasan had already come under his rule and in 261 A.H., he brought all of Iran under his control.

### **The Birth of the Government of the Samaniites**

The details about the Samani dynasty will follow later on. However, in order to remind the readers and to maintain the sequence of events it is pertinent to say something about its origin here.

Asad bin Saman was a member of a reputed and respectable family in Khorasan. He had four sons: Noah, Ahmad, Yahya and Ilyas. During the period when Mamoon Rasheed was staying in Merv, these four brothers called on him. On the suggestion of his Prime Minister Fadal bin Sahal, he appointed them to important posts. When Mamoon Rasheed proceeded to Baghdad after making Ghassan bin Abbad his deputy and the governor of Khorasan, the latter deputed Noah, Ahmad, Yahya, and Ilyas as the rulers of Samarkand, Farghana, Shash and Ashrosna, and Herat respectively.

When Mamoon Rasheed sent his famous general Tahir bin Husain as the governor of Khorasan, he also maintained the status quo by retaining them in their posts. However, when Noah bin Asad died Tahir annexed the regions of Samarkand to Yahya and Ahmad's territories. After a short time, Ilyas died, this was during Tahir's governorship. Tahir made Ilyas's son, Abu Ishaq Muhammad, the ruler of Herat. Ahmad bin Asad had seven sons: Nasr, Yaqub, Yahya, Ismail, Abul Ashas, Abu Khanam, Hameed and Asad. When Ahmad bin Asad passed away, his elder son Nasr succeeded him as the Governor of Samarkand.

Nasr continued to be given the governorship of this province until the Tahir family was dethroned from Khorasan and Yaqub bin Laith Saffar captured it. In 261 A.H., Caliph Motamid Alallah sent the letter of governorship of Samarkand to Nasr directly. The Governor of this province used to receive the letter of Governorship from the Governor of Khorasan. In view of losing control over Khorasan and Yaqub Saffar gaining control over it, the Caliph thought it best that he should keep his leadership in Mawaraunnahr. Therefore, the letter was sent from the Caliph's court with the instruction that he should protect Samarkand from Yaqub Saffar. Nasr bestowed the state of Bukhara on his brother Ismail and he himself continued to rule over Samarkand. In 275 A.H., they developed resentment against each other, which escalated into a military confrontation. Ismail won and Nasr came to Ismail in chains. Ismail ran to him and kissed his feet, made him sit on the throne and promised to obey him. They reconciled and both the brothers began to govern under the name of Ismail. This same Ismail founded the government of the Samanids, which will be dealt with later on in the narrative.

### **The Oath for the Heir Apparent**

In Shawwal 261 A.H., Caliph Motamid held open court and made the proclamation before all the courtiers that his son Jafar would be the heir apparent and after him his brother Ahmad Mowaffaq. However, in case Jafar did not reach the age of discretion, then Mowaffaq would be the Caliph first to be followed by Jafar.

Everyone took an oath on this proclamation. Jafar was given the title Mufawwad ilallah, and made the Governor of Africa, Egypt, Syria, Mousil, Jazirah and Armenia. Musa bin Bagha was made his deputy. Abul Wajid was entitled as Nasir li deenillah Al-Mowaffaq and made the Governor of the Eastern countries, Baghdad, Kufa, the route to Makkah, Yemen, Kaskar, Ahwaz, Iran, Isfahan, Rayy, Zanzan and Sindh. Two different flags were made for them. After this oath, Caliph Motamid assigned the task of punishing the rebel slaves to his brother Mowaffaq.

## **The Battle of Saffar**

Mowaffaq had hardly set out towards the rebellious slaves when the Caliph received news that Yaqub Saffar after capturing and consolidating Khorasan was marching towards the capital with his army. The Caliph's brother Mowaffaq postponed his expedition against the rebels and returned to the capital. The Caliph himself left the capital and stayed at Zafranya and sent his brother Mowaffaq to fight with Saffar. The right flank was controlled by Musa bin Bagha while the left one was commanded by Masroor Balkhi. Mowaffaq was in the middle. They fought a very fierce battle from dawn to dusk. Sometimes Saffar's army retreated and sometimes Mowaffaq's army fell back. The battle remained indecisive. Meanwhile the Caliph sent another army to aid Mowaffaq. The arrival of this fresh army spelled defeat for Yaqub bin Laith's army. Yaqub and his soldiers fled. Mowaffaq and his army looted their camp. After being defeated Saffar moved towards Khazistan and stayed at Jandisabor. Mowaffaq could not follow Saffar and went to Wasit. He fell ill and returned to Baghdad.

While Mowaffaq and Saffar were at war, Muhammad bin Wasil who had fled after loosing Iran to Saffar found an opportunity and rebelled, the field of opposition was empty and he recaptured Iran.

When Saffar went to Jundisabor after his defeat, the slaves sent a letter to Saffar, goading him to fight against the Caliph and assuring him of their help. In reply to the letter Saffar quoted following Verses of Qur'an:

"Say O Unbelievers .....to you your religion and to me my religion." (109:1-6)

And sent an army under the command of Omar bin Sirsi to fight against Muhammad bin Wasil. Omar bin Sirsi expelled Wasil from Iran and captured it. After fighting with Yaqub Saffar, Motamid sent Musa bin Bagha to crush the rebellious slaves. Saffar sent a commander to Ahwaz. It was at Ahwaz that the three armies, the Caliph's, Saffar's and the slaves' clashed with one another. No one supported the other. Yaqub Saffar left Jundisabor and went to Sajistan after deputing Aziz bin Sirri in Nishapur and his brother Omar bin Laith in Herat. These events took place in 261 A.H.

## **The Conquest of Wasit**

After capturing Jundisabor and deputing his administrator, Yaqub Saffar had gone to Sajistan. A commander had been sent to Ahwaz. Finally, the slaves recognized Saffar's conquest of Ahwaz, made peace with Saffar and turned to Wasit. In Wasit, a Turk commander was in charge by the order of the Caliph. The Caliph's soldiers could not stand against the slaves and they defeated him and conquered Wasit. This occurred in 263 A.H.

## **Ahmad bin Tuloon's occupation of Syria**

In 264 A.H., a Turk named Majoor ruled over Syria. His son succeeded him after his death. Upon receipt of this news Ahmad bin Tuloon left his son Abbas as his deputy in Egypt and he went to Damascus. Majoor's son laid down his arms and Tuloon's men captured Damascus and all their territories in 264 A.H. He stayed in Syria for two years and after making satisfactory arrangements, he went back to Egypt in 266 A.H. From this point, Ahmad bin Tuloon's territory included Egypt and Syria.

## **Yaqub bin Laith Saffar's Death**

Yaqub bin Laith Saffar had gained much power. Ahmad bin Abdullah Khajistani, Sayeed bin Tahir, Ali bin Yahya Kharji, Hasan bin Zaid Alawi, Rafe bin Harisimah had all made their claims to being the ruler of Khorasan, Tabristan and Iran. They had been at war with one another with no clear victor. Outwardly it seemed Yaqub bin Laith Saffar was more able, braver and more powerful and he possessed a larger territory. When Motamid realized that Syria had gone out of his control, a greater part of Iraq was under the slaves occupation and the eastern province of Khorasan and Iran had been lost, he thought it wise that the letter of Governorship of provinces like Khorasan should be given to Yaqub bin Laith from the Caliph's court. By making him legitimate, the Caliph felt that he could win his allegiance and these territories would have a proper administration. The negotiations to arrange this had already started when Yaqub bin Laith Saffar died of colic. The Caliph had sent the documents of Governorship of Iran to

Yaqub Saffar but it reached him when he was dying. After his death, his brother Amr bin Laith Saffar succeeded to the throne. He sent a declaration of his obedience and allegiance to the Caliph. The Caliph was overjoyed and bestowed on him the Governorship of Khorasan, Isfahan, Sindh and Sajistan in addition to making him the Chief of Police of Baghdad and Samarra. He also sent him a royal robe. This appointment letter and the royal robe led to the recognition of his government willingly by the masses and added to his power.

### **Extermination of the Rebel Slaves by Mowaffaq and Motazid**

The rebellion of the slaves and the repeated failure of the Caliph's armies against the slaves was not something ordinary. The slaves had been defeating the Caliph's armies and famous generals for 10 years and had destroyed the peace in the Iraqi cities. Each slave had forcibly kept 10 to 15 Alawi and Hashmi women. Their leaders named Bahbood and Khabbees used to verbally abuse the righteous Caliphs, the family of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his wives from their pulpits. Bahbood claimed to be omniscient and a Prophet. These slaves had killed thousands of Muslims. Their continuous victories had left the people's hearts filled with terror and they put an end to the Turk's pride of valor.

The Turk's trembled at their names. Ultimately, Caliph Motamid's brother Mowaffaq assigned his son Abul Abbas who later became Caliph with the title Motazid Billah, the expedition to fight the slaves in Rabia Thani 266 A.H. After a very fierce battle near Wasit, he defeated them. This was the first significant setback they received from the Caliph's army. After this Mowaffaq joined his son and both of them began to defeat them regularly over the next four years. The slaves' leader Khabbees was killed on 1 Saffar 270 A.H. and their reign of terror was ended. When news reached Baghdad that the slave leader was killed and the evil ended, there was a great celebration in the city. While father and son, Mowaffaq and Motazid were at war with the slaves the Khwarij had revolted in Mousil.

Masawar Khwarji, as has already been stated, had been killed in 263 A.H. His followers and disciples formed different groups and began

to fight with each other until 276 A.H. No effort was made by the Caliph's court to restore peace in the region, which lets us know the condition of things in the occupied territories.

### **Anarchy in Khorasan**

When Yaqub Saffar died, Caliph Motamid appointed his brother Amr bin Laith as Governor. However, the supporters of the Tahir dynasty were still present in Khorasan. Two of them, Abu Talha and Rafe bin Harisimah, formed groups in the name of Husain bin Tahir and established their own government. They expelled Amr bin Laith's administrators from the cities of the territory then they quarreled with each other. In the ensuing battles they used to seek help from the ruler of Bukhara, Ismail bin Ahmad bin Asad bin Samani.

Ismail Samani sometimes would help one and sometimes the other and sometimes he would help their common enemy Amr bin Laith Saffar. In brief, there was great tension in these territories. During this time, Mowaffaq deputed Muhammad bin Tahir as Governor of Khorasan. In 271 A.H. Caliph Motamid, who had given Amr bin Laith Saffar the Governorship of Khorasan, deposed Amr Saffar. Muhammad bin Tahir stayed in Baghdad. He deputed Rafe bin Harisimah as the governor of Khorasan and his deputy. This did not make any difference or put an end to the unrest and anarchy in Khorasan and its adjoining provinces.

### **Ahmad bin Tuloon's Death**

Ahmad bin Tuloon, who has already been dealt with in detail, had Egypt and Syria under his occupation. Caliph Motamid was a Caliph in name only and his brother Mowaffaq by virtue of his wisdom and valor dominated all affairs of the Caliphate. Motamid entered into correspondence with Ahmad bin Tuloon and wanted him to go to Egypt on his behalf. This happened in 269 A.H. while Mowaffaq was engaged in war with the rebel slaves. Mowaffaq tried to make Motamid understand with the help of other leaders that supporting Ahmad bin Tuloon was not to their benefit and asked him to desist, because of this Mowaffaq became angry with Ahmad Tuloon.

Ahmad Tuloon became sick in Antakia and died and his son Khumarwaih succeeded him as the Governor of Syria and Egypt. When Mowaffaq became free from the slave rebellion in 270 A.H., he sent Ishaq bin Kandaj and Muhammad bin Abu Saj to capture Syria. These two commanders began to conquer city after city. Khūmarwaih sent an army to face them. These two commanders hesitated in starting the battle and were on the defensive. In view of this, Mowaffaq sent his son Abul Abbas Motazid to Syria. Motazid pushed the Egyptian army back, conquered Damascus and continued to move ahead. Khumarwaih came to fight and Abul Abbas Motazid suffered a defeat and returned to Damascus. The inhabitants of Damascus did not open the gate of city for him. Helplessly, he went to Tartoots. Khumarwaih came to Damascus and the circulation of his coins and the Friday sermon in his name began. The inhabitants of Tartoots revolted and expelled Abul Abbas Motazid and began to read Khumarwaih's name in the Friday sermon. Abul Abbas distressed and a failure went back to Baghdad.

### **Situation in Tabristan: Alawi, Rafe and Saffar**

It has been stated above that Hasan bin Zaid Alawi had established his government with the assistance of the inhabitants of Delam. Hasan bin Zaid died in Rajab 270 A.H. Then his brother Mohammad bin Zaid assumed power in Tabristan. In 272 A.H., a Turk administrator of Qazween invaded Tabristan with an army of 4,000 men. Muhammad bin Zaid faced him with 8,000 soldiers but was defeated and took refuge in Jurjan. However, immediately after the departure of the victorious army he re-captured Tabristan. In 275 A.H. Rafe bin Harisimah attacked Jurjan. Muhammad bin Zaid fought and after a prolonged battle lost control over Tabristan. Finally, in 283 A.H., Rafe bin Harisimah was killed while fighting with Amr bin Laith. Muhammad bin Zaid reoccupied Jurjan but Amr bin Laith Saffar dethroned him.

In 288 A.H., Ismail Samani caught Amr bin Laith Saffar and sent him to Baghdad. Muhammad bin Zaid revolted in Delam again and captured Tabristan. Then Ismail Samani sent Muhammad bin Haroon to Tabristan. Muhammad bin Zaid was killed in the encounter and his son Zaid bin Muhammad was caught and sent to jail in Bukhara.

## **Amr bin Laith Saffar**

Amr bin Laith Saffar had been given the Governorship of Khorasan, Sajistan and other territories by the Caliph's court as has been recorded above and Iran was also under his control. In 271 A.H., a letter of his dismissal was issued from the Caliph's court and the administrator of Isfahan, Ahmad bin Abdul Aziz bin Abi Walf, was instructed to fight Amr bin Laith and liberate the Province of Iran. They clashed and Amr bin Laith was defeated but he retained his hold on the Province Iran.

Ultimately in 274 A.H., Mowaffaq himself invaded Iran, he took the Province of Iran from Amr bin Laith and returned to Baghdad. Amr bin Laith went to Kerman and Sajistan and began to rule over Sajistan and Khorasan successfully. Then he sent gifts to the Caliph's court and enhanced his influence and in 278 A.H., he received the governorship of the territory of Mawaraunnahr, Bukhara, Samarkand etc., from the Caliph's court. Ismail bin Ahmad Samani had been ruling over Mawaraunnahr successfully. With the receipt of the governorship of Mawaraunnahr Amr bin Laith became busy collecting soldiers, arms and equipment. When Ismail bin Ahmed Samani found out, he wrote to Amr bin Laith: "I have been lying here out of the way in this border area. You have a larger country. Let me lie here and don't try to remove me." Amr bin Laith did not pay any heed to the letter and attacked him. Ismail Samani fought Amr bin Laith who was captured and sent to jail in Samarkand. In 288 A.H., Ahmed sent him to the Caliph in Baghdad. He remained there until Caliph Motazid's death. When Muktafi Billah came to power, he had him killed.

## **Conditions in Makkah and Madinah**

In Madinah, Muhammad bin Hasan bin Jafar bin Musa Kazim and his brother Ali bin Hasan began to fight against each other. Fear of the government was non-existent. Civil wars were raging everywhere. These two brothers also created an upheaval in Madinah. Many men on both sides were killed. In 277 A.H., for one month Friday congregational prayers could not be held in Madinah. The same conditions existed in Makkah also. Yusuf bin Abu Saj was the



Governor of Makkah. Ahmad bin Muhammad Tai was awarded the letter of governorship from the Caliph's court in his place.

Ahmad Tai sent his slave Badr as the leader of the pilgrimage on his behalf. Yusuf fought against him. The confrontation took place in front of the Holy Mosque around the Ka'bah. Yusuf arrested Badr. Badr's soldiers and the pilgrims launched a joint attack, arrested Yusuf, sent him to Baghdad and freed Badr. The situation everywhere was deteriorating.

### **Mowaffaq's Death**

Caliph Motamid Billah was a nominal Caliph. His brother Mowaffaq, by virtue of his valor and wisdom, dominated over all state affairs. He was the virtual Caliph though he was not the legal Caliph. As mentioned above, Mowaffaq was also the heir apparent. Prior to his rule, the Turk chiefs had been ruling and dominating the Caliph's court. Mowaffaq maneuvered and succeeded in breaking their power. Since he had defeated the rebel slaves, his and his son's popularity increased considerably among the Muslims. The Turk chiefs had been unable to defeat the slaves and they didn't dare to oppose him.

However, since the entire administration had totally collapsed anarchy continued to spread. The power that had held the dynasty together was now dissipated and the territories were asserting their independence and autonomy, which could not be suppressed. Yet, Mowaffaq's presence in the capital was a great source of strength and no one had the heart to challenge his leadership or expunge his name from the Friday sermon.

When Mowaffaq returned from Isfahan, he came down with the gout. He was treated by physicians but in vain. He died on 22 Saffar 278 A.H. and was buried at RaSaffah. Though Caliph Motamid was living, he was only a figurehead. Following Mowaffaq's death, the members of the government and generals of the army unanimously selected Mowaffaq's son Abul Abbas Motazid as the heir apparent and Caliph Motamid made an announcement of his succession and placed him in his father's position. Since Motazid was a very experienced and brave man, he came to dominate over all the state administration like his father and Caliph Motamid remained ineffectual.

## **Qaramata**

In 278 A.H., a man in Kufa named Hamdan, popularly known as Qaramata, introduced a new religion. He was an extranist Shiite. He believed that the Imams were only seven in number: 1. Imam Husain (RA) 2. Ali Zianul Abedeen (RA), 3. Baqar bin Ali (RA) 4. Jafar Sadiq (RA) 5. Ismail bin Jafar 6. Muhammad bin Ismail 7. Obaidullah bin Muhammad. He called himself the deputy of Obaidullah bin Muhammad although Muhammad bin Ismail did not have a son named Obaidullah. He regarded Muhammad bin Al-Hanafia bin Ali bin Abi Talib as a prophet and added the following words to the call to prayer: "I bear witness that Muhammad bin Hanafia is a Messenger." He declared the Holy Mosque in Jerusalem as the direction for Prayer, which was made only two times a day, before sunrise and after sunset. He maintained that some verses were revealed to Muhammad bin Al-Hanafia Monday instead of Friday was considered the holy day of the week and he did not do any work on that day. He believed that only a few days of fasting a year was compulsory. He declared date juice unlawful while wine was made lawful. He said bathing after coition was unnecessary, (this of course is in direct contravention of Islamic law.) He made certain animals legal to be eaten while others were forbidden and declared unlawful. Whoever opposed him was declared worthy of death. He chose for his title Qaim Bil-Haq.

He talked to the chiefs of the slaves Khabbees and Bahbood about his new religion and wanted to convert them to his views but they did not attach any importance to him. Eight years after their defeat he began to propagate his beliefs in Kufa and many people began to accept them. Becoming aware of his activities the Governor of Kufa had him arrested and put in jail.

The guards of the jail were derelict in their duties and he escaped. His followers publicized the event as if he had special powers. Gradually people from a far began to talk about this religion and join it.

There are a group of people who trade guidance for falsehood and are infatuated with the blind despite their ability to see and worship that

which is senseless despite their having intelligence. These people are found throughout history until our present time and they were the type of people who rushed to embrace Qaramafa's new religion.

## **Succession of Motazid**

As mentioned above after Mowaffaq's death, Motazid was made the heir apparent and he was to be the Caliph after Jafar bin Motamid. Jafar bin Motamid was first in succession to the throne and Motazid was second after him. His father Mowaffaq was also the second in succession behind Jafar but in 279 A.H. Motamid, being impressed by Motazid's power and ability gave priority to him as heir apparent over his own son Jafar and had the certificates authorizing his succession issued to the Governors in the provinces.

## **The Roman War**

The Romans have not been mentioned during the discussion of this turbid period of Motamid's Caliphate. In 257 A.H. Saqalabi, a relative of the king of Constantinople, Michael bin Rafael, killed him and usurped the throne. In 259 A.H., the Romans invaded Maltiya but were defeated. In 263 A.H., they captured the fort of Karkarah, adjacent to Tartoos, from the Muslims. In 264 A.H., Abdullah Rasheed bin Kaloos invaded Roman territory with 40,000 Syrian border troops. In the initial stage he was successful but later was captured and sent to Constantinople.

In 265 A.H., the Romans led an attack on Ain Ofa, 400 Muslim were martyred and 400 were captured. The same year the Roman emperor freed Abdullah bin Rasheed and sent him with a few volumes of the Qur'an to Ahmad bin Tuloon as gifts. In 266 A.H., the war ships of the Muslims and the Romans clashed with each other at a place adjacent to the Island of Saqliya. The Muslims lost and the Romans captured several of their boats. The remaining ships took shelter on the coast of Saqliya.

Ahmad bin Tuloon's Syrian deputy launched a successful attack on Rome and captured a large amount of spoils of war. In 270 A.H., the Romans numbering 100,000 attacked Qaliniya, situated at a distance

of 6 miles from Tartoos. The Governor of Tartoos, Mazyar, launched a night attack on the Romans and 70,000 of them were killed. The Chief Prelate was captured and their Great Cross also came into the Muslim's possession. In 273 A.H., the governor of Tartoos, Mazyar, attacked the Romans and returned victorious. In 278 A.H., Mazyar and Ahmad Jofi jointly invaded the Roman Empire. During the battle, Mazyar was hit on the head by a stone from a catapult. He stopped the fight and started to return to the capital but died on way. The Muslims buried him at Tartoos. Although there was a great upheaval in the Islamic world and civil wars had broken out all over, the Romans failed to score any major success against the Muslims.

### **Motamid's Death**

Caliph Motamid Alallah bin Motawakkil Alallah died on 20 Rajab 270 A.H. and was buried at Samarra, the capital of the Abbasid Caliph since Motasim Billah bin Haroon Rasheed shifted there. Motamid left Samarra and chose to live in Baghdad, which then became the capital. It was due to this change of capital that the Turk chiefs who dominated over the Caliph and his court lost their power suddenly. This shifting of the capital was the idea of Motamid's wise brother Mowaffaq.

During Motamid's regime, the powers of the government and its wealth had declined. The members of the government as described, dissented, hated and opposed one another openly. All the occupied territories were in a shambles and there were riots and anarchy everywhere. The people had lost the fear of the Caliph's authority. Whoever found an opportunity usurped the territory he could. The governors of the provinces stopped sending taxes. There was total lawlessness all over. Whoever captured a territory would introduce his own law.

Atrocities began to be perpetrated upon the people and the governors subjected them to all sorts of harassments with impunity.

Banu Saman established their government in Mawaraunnahr, Banu Saffar in Sajistan, Kerman, Khorasan and Persia. Hasan bin Zaid in Tabrisian and Jurjan, the rebel slaves in Basra, uballa and Wasit, the Khwarij in Mousil and Jazirah, Ahmad bin Tuloon in Egypt and Syria

and Ibn Aghlab in North Africa. Besides these, there were other minor chiefs who were busy fighting trying to capture smaller territories and states. The only symbol of the Caliph that remained was that they mentioned his name in the Friday sermon but none of his orders were complied with. Mowaffaq spent all his energy and life in fighting riots and disturbances but except for the extermination of the rebel slaves, he failed to achieve any other significant success.

It was at that time that the criminals like Qaramata made their advances. Similarly during the same period Obaidullah bin Obaid who descended from the Egyptian kings and the Shiites of Yemen, claimed to be the Mahdi (a future Muslim leader that was spoken of by the Prophet ﷺ). He took the majority of the members of the Banu Kenana tribe and went to the western territories where in stages, he found an independent government in Egypt and the rest of North Africa. During the same period, the well-known Islamic scholars and Muhaddith like Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim, Abu Daud, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah died. In short, 23 years of Motamid's caliphate passed in this state of disintegration, distress and disappointment.

### **Comment**

Nearly 150 years have passed since the Caliphate of Banu Abbas ended. The Abbasid caliphate began with 100 years of grandeur and progress. The signs of decline started appearing with the death of Mutasim Billah in 272 A.H. Inauspicious days befell the caliphate and for 20 years, the negative impact continued until Motawakkil Alallah's murder. During this period it was expected that the Abbasid caliphate would bring back its 100 years of lost glory and power but with Motawakkil Alallah's murder in 247 A.H. their abilities suddenly became paralyzed leaving no chance for restoration. We have studied the 22-year period of aging. The caliphate survived for several hundred years more in this debilitated form. Many different centers of Islamic rule were established. The caliphate of Baghdad or the Abbasid Caliphate retained its glory but little and it was not to be a serious power again.

With the given circumstances if the remainder of the Abbasid Caliphate is dealt with in the same detail as we have dealt with it up to this point in history, the readers' interest in history will evaporate

and they will feel unnecessarily and mentally burdened. Brevity has been maintained and in the rest of the narrative, our concentration will be on the important events. At this point in the narrative many new lineages and new dynasties of rulers are emerging and to record them parallel to each other is difficult. However, their beginnings and how they came to assume power in relation to their connection to the Abbasids is important and will be referred to in their proper places.

The greatest mistake of Banu Umayyah was that it provided the way to ruin by introducing hereditary succession and got the Muslims habituated to this evil practice. Similarly, the fault of Banu Abbas is no less than that of Banu Umayyah. They effaced every object of Banu Umayyah and demolished and leveled to the ground all their memorials. However, they fully protected the evil practice of hereditary succession and hastened the Muslim's ruin.

The second major error they committed was that right from their very beginning they opposed the Arabs and sympathized with the new Muslims from Iran who were still subject to the prejudices of their culture. From the first Caliph Saffah to Mamoon Rasheed each caliph except Mahdi reduced the power of the Arabs and goaded and pushed ahead those still enamored with the Zoroastrian religion with the result that the Abbasids were unable to expand beyond the circle of victories set by Banu Umayyah and gradually that area of their authority continued to shrink.

Only a few of the former Zoroastrians grasped the real glory and morality of Islam. The other descendents of the Zoroastrians created many problems and hardships for the Abbasid caliphs but the wise and farsighted of them succeed in overcoming these problems.

Motasim Billah organized the Turks of Mawaraunnahr as a new group in the balance of power. Their national and racial heritage was different than the Khorasanis. His plan would have proved effective if he had not made the Turks more powerful than the Khorasanis and had made the Arabs equal to them in power. However, the Arab's relation with the Abbasids continued to be diminished. Motasim Billah's shifting of the capital to the Turkish village Samarra proved a great boon to the progress of the Turks. He preferred them probably because they were free from the influence of the Alawiites. The

Abbasids, who were Arabs, hated the Arabs simply because the Alawiites were Arabs. These Alawiites influence on the Zoroastrian Iranians whom the Banu Abbas used and counted on was great. This continuously led to conflicts and deception. Distancing himself from these two groups, Mutasim selected a third group historically free from these machinations. However, the Turks unlike the Iranians were not cultured or well versed in statecraft. They needed a strong and alert hand to control them and use them to their best advantage.

Had there been even a few leaders with the heart and faith of Haroon and Mamoon, the glory of the caliphate of the Abbasids would have gone higher. Mutasim was wise enough to make Samarra the capital but coupled with the weakness of his successors and the diminished Arabic element, created many problems, which his successors could not remedy. The Turks were nomadic fighters without vision. They could neither establish their own government nor did they turn to the Alawiites to establish a dynasty. The Alawiites had removed themselves from open contention for the Caliphate after becoming tired and frustrated with their failures. There was no clear apprehension of any real danger to the caliphate of the Abbasids from them.

After Mutasim when commotion and turmoil erupted in the land, the Alawiites had a far-reaching impact on all the provinces and all the governors and administrators throughout the Islamic territories and they became busy establishing their own separate and independent governments.

The examples of Andalusia, Morocco and North Africa were clearly known by all. With the failure of the heart, the circulation of blood to all the organs of the body stopped. Observing the independence and lawlessness of the Governors and administrators the Alawiites, Khwarij, rebel slaves, Qaramatins and others geared up to take a chance to establish their own governments. The conditions deteriorated to such an extent that even a Mansoor or Haroon could probably not have succeeded. Motawakkil's murder was the blackest and the most inauspicious incident of the Abbasid caliphate. Had Mowaffaq succeeded Motawakkil, he might have possibly controlled the situation but he did not get a chance to work as the caliph and his son, Motazid who was ambitious and brave like his father, received the caliphate when the disease of anarchy had become quite incurable.

## Chapter 5

# **The Caliphate of the Abbasids** (Third Phase)

### **Motazid Billah**

The real name of Motazid Billah bin Mawaffiq Billah bin Motawakkil Alallah bin Motasim Billah bin Haroon Rasheed was Ahmad. His kunya was Abul Abbas. He was born of a slave girl named Sawab in Rabia Awwal 243 A.H. and after his uncle Motamid Billah he came to the throne in Rajab 279 A.H. He was a handsome and wise man. He did not evade strictness and bloodshed if needed. He was careful and discerning. He was inimical to astrologers and storytellers. Philosophy had been in vogue since Mamoon's times. Motazid banned the publication of books on philosophy and debate in order to avoid religious strife and conflict that the society had become prone to. He reduced the taxes on his subjects. He loved justice and protected the people from being subjected to injustice and tyranny.

The building of Dar An-Nadwah in Makkah had survived until this time. Motazid had it demolished and built a mosque near the Haram. The majority of the people who were originally Zoroastrian introduced celebrating their old holidays and performed certain rites concerning the



lighting of their religious fires in Baghdad. Motazid strictly banned it. He set up an office of religious affairs and gave money to the poor religious ascetics. The people prayed for him. He married the daughter of the Governor of Egypt Khumarwaih bin Ahmad Tuloon.

Once Motazid sent word to Qadi Abu Hazim. "You have managed to recover a certain persons money from another party. That same party owes something to me. Please have it returned to me." The Qadi sent the following reply, "If you present a witness you will also have a decree in your favor." Motazid's witnesses refused to stand witness on his behalf finally the Qadi declared his case void and Motazid the Caliph could not get back his money. He had come to the throne at a very critical and bad time in the Abbasid dynasty. He tried his best to improve the degenerating condition of the Abbasids. Some signs of improvement began to be visible but his successors didn't have the ability to maintain the pace of progress.

Shortly after he came to the throne, Nasr bin Ahmad Samani died and he was succeeded by his brother Ismail bin Ahmad Samani as the governor of MaWaraunnahr. Two groups of the Khwarij were at war in the region of Mousil. The leader of one group Abu Jauzah was brought to Baghdad in 280 A.H. as a captive. Motazid tortured him to death. The leader of the other group Haroon Shari remained rebellious. In 280 A.H., Motazid invaded Jazirah, punished and disciplined the tribe of Bani Shaiban and returned to Baghdad with a large quantity of spoils of war.

Motazid appointed his slave Badr as Chief of Police and Obaidullah bin Sulaiman bin Wahab his minister in 281 A.H. Motazid caught Hamdan bin Hamdoon who had captured the fort of Mardeen and established a friendship with Haroon Shari. The Caliph then had the fort leveled to the ground.

In 281 A.H., Caliph Motazid deputed his son Ali, known as Muktafi, to rule over Rayy, Qazween, Zanjan, Qom and Jadan. In Rabia Awwal 283 A.H., Caliph Motazid arrived near to Mousil and succeeded in destroying the Khwarij. He arrested and jailed Haroon and returned to Baghdad. He made a public display of Haroon and had him killed. In 285 A.H., he invaded Azerbaijan, conquered the fort of Amad, arrested Ahmad bin Isa bin Sheikh and went back to Baghdad in Rabia Awwal 286 A.H.

## **Qaramata's Revolt**

In 281 A.H., one of Qaramat's followers, Yahya bin Mahdi, arrived at Qateef near Dammam and Bahrain and lodged at Ali bin Moalla bin Hamdan's house and said, "I have been sent by the Mahdi the leader of our time. He is about to revolt very soon."

Ali was a Shiite. He collected all the Shiites and read to them the Mahdi's letter brought by Yahya. They very sincerely promised to revolt at the appearance of Mahdi. Then Yahya disappeared for a few days and when he returned, he presented another letter written by the Mahdi instructing everyone to pay 36 dinars each to Yahya. The Shiites at once complied. Yahya again came after a few days with a third letter from the Mahdi instructing them to contribute one fifth of their money to Yahya.

In 286 A.H., Abu Sayeed Janani went to Bahrain and openly invited the people to accept Qaramata's religion. Those who had already accepted it secretly began to assemble under its flag openly. Abu Sayeed took all of them to Qateef where he prepared and fully armed them and set out for Basra. When Motazid was informed of all these incidents, he wrote to the governor of Basra, Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Yahya Wasqi, "Have a wall constructed around the city." It was completed at the cost of 14,000 dinars.

When Abu Sayeed reached the vicinity of Basra, Abbas bin Omar Ghanwi arrived from the capital Baghdad with 2,000 men to defend Basra. They fought and Abu Sayeed captured Abbas and the men with him, his men were thrown into a fire and burnt to ashes. This occurred in Shaban 287 A.H.

Abu Sayeed Qaramati left Basra after this victory and went to Hajr. He gave amnesty to the civilians and captured it and then went to Basra. The people of Basra were extremely terrified. The Governor of the city Ahmad bin Muhammad Wasqi consoled and pacified them. Abu Sayeed released Abbas from captivity, left Basra and went to Bahrain. In 288 A.H., a man named Abul Qasim Yahya, known as Zikrwaih bin Mehrwaih, went to Kufa. The tribe of Qalees bin Zamzam bin Adi became inclined to the religion of Qaramata. Slowly

the number of its followers began to multiply.

A chief named Shibl attacked them. The fight saw the arrest of a commander of Qaramata, Abul Fawaris. The remainder fled to Damascus. Shibl sent Abul Fawaris to caliph Motazid in Baghdad who had him killed. Qaramata went to Damascus to try to win the people over to him. At the time, the governor of Egypt was Tafaj. He fought with Qaramata several times and each time the Qaramata was victorious. This happened in 289 A.H. The remaining details about Qaramata will follow later in the narrative.

In 286 A.H., Caliph Motazid bestowed on his son Ali, whose future title was Muktafi, the governorship of Jazirah and Awasim. He recalled Hasan bin Amr Nasrani and made him his minister.

In 288 A.H., Tahir bin Muhammad bin Amr bin Laith Saffar collected an army and wanted to capture Iran but Ismail Samani warned him saying, "If you have a mind to attack this province, I shall come." Tahir stopped. However, Caliph Motazid's slave Badr conquered Iran.

After the minister Obaidullah bin Sulaiman bin Wahab's death, Caliph Motazid made his son Abul Qasim the Prime Minister. During Caliph Motazid regime the Muslims invaded Rome in 285 A.H. and 287 A.H. Sometimes the Romans were victorious and sometimes the Muslims.

## **Death of Motazid Billah**

In 289 A.H., Caliph Motazid died of overindulgence in sex. He suffered from a number of diseases. While the doctor was feeling his pulse, Motazid kicked him so hard that the doctor was knocked down and died. Motazid breathed his last at the same moment.

Motazid was survived by 4 sons and 11 daughters. Motazid died at the end of Rabia Awwal 289 A.H.

## **Muktafi Billah**

The first name of Muktafi Billah bin Motazid Billah bin Mawaffiq Billah bin Motawakkil Alallah bin Motasim Billah bin Haroon Rasheed was Ali and his kunya was Abu Muhammad. He was born of a Turk slave girl the named Jeejak. There have been only two Caliphs

bearing the name Ali, one Ali (☙) and the other Muktafi Billah. Motazid Billah had made him his heir-apparent.

When Motazid died, Muktafi was in Riqqah and Badr the slave was in Iran. Prime Minister Qasim bin Obaidullah took the oath from the people in the name of Muktafi and sent the information to him in Riqqah. Muktafi entered Baghdad on 7 Jumad Awwal and gave Prime Minister Qasim seven royal robes. Muktafi was just, even tempered and handsome, minister Qasim bin Obaidullah did not want any of Muktafi's sons to be Caliph Motazid's he wanted somebody else from the Abbasids to follow Muktafi.

Badr objected and his opposition made the minister give up the idea. When Muktafi came to the throne, he thought that if Badr informed the Caliph of his intention, the Caliph would turn against him. He made a plan to misguide the Caliph before Badr's arrival. He called all the leaders who were with Badr in Iran. When Badr left Iran and came to Wasit, the minister sent an army to Wasit. Badr wanted to present himself to the Caliph and prove his innocence. The minister made the Caliph extremely angry with Badr and consequently he was killed before he entered Baghdad.

Badr was very wise, brave and was a good manager. His murder was unjust like the murder of Harsima bin Ayun that took place during the early period of Mamoon Rasheed's caliphate. Muhammad Haroon, a rebel chief of Ismail Samani, captured Rayy and Caliph Muktafi sent an army, which was routed by Muhammad bin Haroon. Then Caliph Muktafi Billah gave authority over Rayy to Ismail Samani and he captured Rayy. Muhammad Haroon was defeated and fled he was later captured and Ismail Samani put him in jail where he died in Shaban 290 A.H.

### **Qaramata's Attack on Syria**

It has been stated above that Qaramata and his followers had captured Bahrain. Then they surfaced in Kufa but they were defeated there. Qaramata then went to Damascus and repeatedly defeated the governor of Damascus named Tafaj and then besieged the city. Qaramata's tyranny in Damascus forced Muktafi Billah to leave

Baghdad and go to Riqqah this occurred in 290 A.H. Commander Muhammad bin Sulaiman was given an army and sent to Damascus to punish Qaramata. Muhammad bin Sulaiman fought with Qaramata valiantly. The commander of Qaramata Abul Qasim Yahya known as Zakarria was caught on 6 Muharram 291 A.H. Many of Qaramata's men were killed and captured and the rest fled. Zakarria was brought as a captive to Muktafi in Riqqah who had him killed.

After Zakarria's capture, his brother Husain collected the Qaramata and created unrest. He was also killed. Husain Qaramati called himself Amir al-Muminin Mahdi. His cousin Isa chose Mudassir as his title and gave the impression that the Quranic verse Mudassir referred to his name. In short, in 291 A.H., all of them were killed one by one and thus this evil in Syria was put to an end. However, Qaramata went to Yemen and created trouble there.

### **The End of Bani Tuloon in Egypt**

When Muktafi was free from the war with Qaramata, he left Riqqah and went to Baghdad. The greater part of Syria was included in the jurisdiction of Haroon bin Khomarwaih bin Ahmad bin Tuloon. Neither the Caliph nor Muhammad bin Sulaiman had a mind to fight with him. The movement of the Caliph and dispatching his forces were not only for the sake of protecting his government but also for supporting the king of Egypt, Haroon. Muhammad bin Sulaiman was originally a working leader of the Tuloon dynasty but due to some grievance, he went over to the Caliph's side. On the way to Baghdad, he received a letter from Badr Hamami who was a slave of Haroon bin Khomarwaih.

Badr Hamami had written: "At this time the sultanate of Bani Tuloon is in a shambles. It has become weak and is disintegrating. If you come here with your forces and invade Egypt, I am ready to help you with my men."

Muhammad Sulaiman went to Baghdad with the letter and gave it to Caliph Muktafi. He gave Muhammad bin Sulaiman an army and sent him to Egypt. Muhammad Sulaiman reached there and began a chain of battles.

Badr Hamami sided with Muhammad Sulaiman. Haroon bin Khomarwaih was killed and Muhammad Sulaiman conquered Egypt. All the members of Tuloon dynasty were arrested and sent to Baghdad. This occurred in Safar in 292 A.H. Isa Naushri was made governor by the Caliph and sent to Egypt. Muhammad bin Sulaiman handed over the authority to him and returned to Baghdad. Meanwhile one of the chiefs friendly to Bani Tuloon, general Ibrahim Khilji dethroned Isa Naushri, and captured Egypt. An army was sent from Baghdad, which suffered defeat at first but later Ibrahim was defeated and arrested and sent to jail in Baghdad. The same year the Caliph gave Mozaffar bin Hajj the Governorship of Yemen and sent him there to quell the uproar created by Qaramata.

### **Bani Hamdan**

In 292 A.H., Caliph Muktafi gave the governorship of Mousil to Abul Hija Abdullah bin Hamdan bin Hamdoon Adwi Taghlibe. He arrived in Mousil in Muharram 293 A.H. Soon after his arrival, the Kurds revolted. Abul Hija left Egypt with an army to confront them but was defeated. He went to Mousil and asked the Caliph for reinforcements. The army was sent and in Rabia Awwal 294 A.H. Abul Hija attacked the Kurds. They were terrified and took refuge in the Saleeq Mountains. The siege and fighting continued for a long period. Eventually, the Kurdish leader Muhammad bin Hilal begged for amnesty, which was granted. Abul Hija established his superiority over the entire province and all the Kurds became obedient, he then revolted against the caliph. The caliph at this time was Muqtadir, who sent his servant Munis against him. He arrested Abul Hija and brought him to Baghdad. He was excused and began to live in Baghdad. Abul Hija and his brother Husain along with their other relatives were then arrested and sent to jail. They were released in 305 A.H.

### **Invasions by the Turks and the Romans**

In 291 A.H., the Romans with an army of 100,000 invaded the Islamic territories but they did not succeed. The border commanders put them to rout. In 293 A.H., a new group of invaders appeared, that is the Turks who lived in the northern mountains and forests of Mawaraunnahr. It was the first major attack from this side. The

number of these barbaric invaders was staggering.

Ismail Samani, the governor of Mawaraunnahr acted with courage and perseverance, collected all his forces and taught the invaders a good lesson. Thousands were killed and arrested and the remainder escaped. The same year the Romans begged the Muslims for amnesty and prisoners were exchanged as before. However, soon after this reconciliation they led a night attack on the city of Quras. Thousands of Muslims were killed and captured being caught off-guard. They burnt down the central mosque and returned to Roman territory. The same year Ismail Samani captured some parts of Delam and the territories of the Turks by force. In 294 A.H., the Muslims invaded the Roman territories from Tartoos and captured many Romans including a Prelate who willingly embraced Islam.

### **The Death of Muktafi Billah**

After ruling for six years and six months Muktafi Billah breathed his last in Baghdad on Jamad Awwal 295 A.H. and was buried in Muhammad bin Tahir's house. He had made his brother Jafar his heir-apparent before he died. He left 15 million dinars in the treasury at the time of his death. Jafar bin Motazid was 13. After coming to the throne, he called himself Muqtadir Billah.

### **Muqtadir Billah**

The real name of Muqtadir Billah bin Motazid Billah was Jafar and his kunya was Abul Fadl. He was born of a Roman slave girl Ghuraib. When Muktafi Billah consulted the people on his heir to the throne just before his death, they assured him that his brother Muqtadir Billah had come of age of puberty and only then did he make him his heir-apparent. Before this, no Caliph of such a young age had come to the throne. After his accession, the people began to talk about his abdication. As Prime Minister, Abbas bin Hasan's powers were great and he had been authorized to use the treasury, this caused the members of the government to be apprehensive. The Prime Minister was also not pleased at a boy assuming power. He therefore persuaded Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Motaz to accept the caliphate. While they were preparing for Muqtadir's abdication and Muhammad

Motaz's accession, Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Motaz died. Then arrangements were made to put Abul Husain bin Motawakkil on the throne but he also died. Due to his and Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Motaz's deaths, Caliph Muqtadir's position was firmly established.

After sometime, they started gossiping again and the members of the government wanted to persuade Abdullah bin Motaz to accept the caliphate. He agreed to it provided there should be no bloodshed and all the members of the government also agreed to it. However, Prime Minister Abbas bin Hasan did not agree to it. On 20 Rabia Awwal 296 A.H. while the Prime Minister was going to his garden, he was suddenly attacked and killed. The next day the deposition of Muqtadir was announced and the oath for Abdullah bin Motaz took place. At that time, Caliph Muqtadir was playing polo. Having heard about his deposition, he went to his palace and closed the doors.

Soon after coming to the throne Abdullah bin Motaz chose Al-Murtaza Billah as his title and wrote to Muqtadir, "You will be safe if you leave the capital and give up the desire for the caliphate." Muqtadir replied: "I gladly agree to what you say but give me time until this evening."

At night, the servant Munis consulted other servants on how to create a disturbance. When Husain bin Hamdan came to the palace door in the morning, they showered arrows on him. They continued doing this until the evening. At night, others began to join Muqtadir's group. As a consequence, the new Caliph, Abdullah bin Motaz, along with some of his supporters had to go into hiding. Muqtadir then appointed Abul Hasan bin Forat as Prime Minister. Abdullah bin Mutaz was arrested and killed.

The same year in Rabia Thani 296 A.H., the oath for Obaidullah Mahdi took place in Africa and thus the Obadiyah (Fatimid) dynasty was founded and the Aghlab dynasty came to an end in North Africa.

### **The Origin of the Obadiyah (Fatimid) Dynasty**

The first ruler Obaidullah Mahdi claimed to be the son of Muhammad bin Jafar bin Muhammad bin Ismail bin Jafar Sadiq. The Abbasids questioned his lineage. He in fact was originally a Zoroastrian and some have called him a Christian.



The well-known judge, Qadi Abu Bakr Baqillani, has refuted Obaidullah Mahdi's claim to be from the Prophet's family or to being of a high lineage. During Caliph Qahir Billah's regime when the question of his lineage was under consideration, renowned scholars clearly denounced Obaidullah Mahdi's claim to be an Alawiite. These scholars include Abul Abbas Abyuzah, Abu Hamid Asfaraini and Abu Jafar Nasfi Qudoori. Among the Alawiites Murtada Ibn Bathawi and Ibn Azraq have also called him a fraud in his claim. He was a Shi'ite however, the scholars of the Shi'ites have rebutted his claim to be an Alawi. Furthermore, Abu Abdullah Ibn Norman has also called him a liar in his claim to be an Alawi. The chief of the historians Sheikh Jalaluddin Suyuti has very emphatically proved him to be false in his claim to be of a well-known family. He has proved him to be of Zoroastrian heritage.

However, a very great scholar of history, Ibn Khaldoon has attempted to prove him to be an Alawiite. In both his introduction to history and in his history book Ibn Khaldoon has given recognition to his claim of noble lineage. However, the arguments he has offered in this respect are very weak and in view of his status as a great historian, are very unusual. He writes, "A great dynasty was established in Obaidullah's family. Had he not been an Alawi, the people would not have recognized his leadership and given away their heads under his flag."

Offering such arguments as proof of someone's noble birth is certainly not scientific and the reality is that he has not given even a single proof in this respect. As he himself was a West African, naturally he does not like a western ruler to be discredited. Similarly, he exerts much effort to prove the sultanate of Idrisids of Morocco to be Alawi. He tries his level best to prove Idris II to be son of Idris I and unnecessarily brings into discussion the chastity of a Berber woman. The misunderstanding may possibly be a sin against the Imam in question.

With the beginning of Abbasid caliphate the Alwis antagonistic activities began against the administration. The Alwis rose again and again and every time they met with failure. Abdullah bin Saba, the Jew had sown the seed of discord among the people and conspiracies against the administration. Their nefarious plan was aided and abetted by the Magi, Jews, Berbers etc. who were carrying out their activities

in the garb of neo-Muslims. And when Abbasid dynasty showed signs of weakness some Jews and Magis tried to present themselves as Alwis to benefit from the flowing situation. Since Berber territories were far distant from Baghdad, the centre of power due advantage could be taken of their inherent nature. Thus, a person named Muhammad Habib who lived at Salmia in Homs towards the end of the third century Hajara came on the scene as one descending from Imam J'afar Sadiq's elder son Isma'il. He tried to cash in on his relation with the Imam. Right from his time Imam J'afar Sadiq's influence had spread throughout Yemen, Africa and Morocco. He used all his means, devices and force to turn the people to expect the arrival of Imam Mahdi in immediate future who were to be from among the Alwi Fatimi. Habib sent one of his confidants Rustam bin Hasan bin Hosab to Yemen to convince people of the arrival of Imam Mahdi in near future. He performed his duty with utmost care and tact.

Following this a man named Abu Abdullah Hasan bin Muhammad bin Zakariya, a Shi'ite by faith, and a staunch support of the Alwis came to Habib. He found him promising and sent him, after necessary instructions, to keep company with Rustam bin Hasan for a few days and learn from him the art of preaching and then go to Berber territories to perform his duty. Muhammad Habib had also told Abu Abdullah that his son, Ubaidullah was Imam Mahdi and that he was being sent as one inviting people towards him. Abu Abdullah arrived in Yemen, took lesson in preaching and reached Makkah in Hajj season.

There he sought out the caravan of the Hajjis from Katama and became friendly with them. Observing how pious he was they revered and served him.

When they set out towards Africa after the Hajj, he accompanied them. They took it as an auspicious sign. Reaching Katama, they had a house built for him on Mount Ankajan, which they called Fajjul Akhyar. Abu Abdullah drowned himself in prayer and many visitors came to him eagerly. He told them that the Mahdi was about to appear and that he was instructed by him to stay in Katama and he had told him that his supporters would be from there. Gradually Abu Abdullah's government and leadership became established in Katama.

When the news reached Ibrahim bin Ahmad bin Aghlab, the Governor of North Africa, at the capital Qairwan, he wrote to the ruler of Melah to give him a report about Abu Abdullah. He wrote back that he was an ascetic and instructed the people to perform their prayers and observe fast. Ibrahim was silent after hearing this. After a few days Abu Abdullah armed and fortified his group and invaded Melah city, expelled the governor and captured it. Ibrahim bin Aghlab then gave an army to his son Ahwal and sent him to Melah. Abu Abdullah suffered defeat and fled to Katama and took refuge on Mount Ankajan. Ahwal left for Qairwan.

Meanwhile the ruler of North Africa, Ibrahim bin Ahmad died. His son Abul Abbas then succeeded to the throne. Abu Abdullah founded and populated a city named Darul Hajarah. Ahwal went to mount Ankajan to punish him. Meanwhile Abul Abbas died and his son Zeyadatullah came to the throne.

Zeyadatullah recalled Ahwal and killed him on some false pretext. Abu Abdullah continued to increase his power. He sent a delegation of people from Katama to Obaidullah Mahdi in Homs where he was staying. He briefed him about his victories and asked him to come to North Africa.

Some spies informed Caliph Muktafi Billah of the arrival of the delegation carrying the said message. He at once issued a warrant for the arrest of Obaidullah and wrote to the Egyptian governor Isa Naushri (then Governor of Egypt after the downfall of the Tuloons) to arrest him. [This has also been taken by Ibn Khaldoon as a proof of Obaidullah being a Sayed (from the Prophet's family), indicating that if he had not been of the Prophet's family, the caliph would not have given orders for his arrest. This is another very weak proof, any government would arrest those who desired to overthrow their rule and it is not evidence as to the heritage of any conspirator.] The rulers of the Aghlab dynasty recognized the leadership of the Abbasid caliphate and read the name of the Abbasid Caliph in the Friday sermons. They bordered Egypt so how could Muktafi stand the creation of any major disturbance in North Africa without responding?

Obaidullah left Homs with his son and his supporters. He disguised himself as a merchant and joined a commercial caravan. He was

caught in Egypt but Naushri released him based on incomplete information. He passed through Egypt and entered North Africa. Zeyadatullah's spies were after him but he managed to conceal himself from them until he reached Sijilmassa. The administrator of the place caught him and jailed him along with his son. Zeyadatullah was drowned in debauchery and neglected state administration and consequently Abu Abdullah the Shi'ite's power continued to increase and nothing was done to deter him. When Zeyadatullah saw that Abu Abdullah the Shi'ite had captured the major parts of North Africa and continued to do so, he collected a huge army and sent it to punish him.

Abu Abdullah could not stand the pressure of such a huge army and climbed up the peak of a high mountain. He remained besieged there for six months. In the seventh month, he led a successful night attack on the North African army and put it to rout and then began to conquer city after city. Zeyadatullah then sent another commander to fight against him but he was defeated. Then in 295 A.H. after making special arrangements, he sent his armies and Generals to discipline Abu Abdullah however, he had already established his power. For a year the chain of battles continued. Sometimes Abu Abdullah was defeated and sometimes he defeated the African army. During this period, Abu Abdullah's group kept multiplying and people kept on joining him while Zeyadatullah's army was becoming smaller. One city after another continued to come under Abu Abdullah's control until Zeyadatullah's army commanders started joining him. Urwah bin Yusuf and Hasan bin Abi Khazir joined him and were appointed to important posts. In Rajab 296 A.H., Abu Abdullah captured the capital Qairwan and put Zeyadatullah to rout and let the people of Katama stay in the royal palaces. Then he invaded Sijilmassa, defeated the Governor Yasa' bin Madar, captured and killed him. He then took Obaidullah Mahdi out of the jail and put him on a horse and went to the army camp declaring to all, "This is your leader", referring to the Mahdi. He then left and came to the city of Rafadah. Abu Abdullah and all others took the oath for Obaidullah and called him Al-Mahdi Amir al-Muminin. This oath took place in the last ten days of Rabi'a Thani 296 A.H. and it marks the beginning of the Obaidiah dynasty (Fatimids).

Soon after coming to the throne, Obaidullah Mahdi sent his missionaries to every corner of the territory. Those who refused to accept his religion were killed. He gave feudal estates and important posts to the people of Katama. He sent Hasan bin Abi Khazir to Sicily as its ruler. He reached there on 10 Thul Hijjah 297 A.H. and made all the subjects of the island hate him because of his tyranny.

He began to appoint governors and administrators in the whole of North Africa. In 299 A.H., the people of Sicily sent a letter to Obaidullah Mahdi complaining against Hasan bin Ahmad bin Abi Khazir. He sent Ali bin Omar as Governor in his place. The civilians were displeased with him too. They deposed him and chose Ahmad bin Mohib as their leader. Ahmad bin Mohib induced the people to obey the Abbasid Caliph Muqtadir Billah. He expunged Mahdi's name from the Friday sermon and entered Muqtadir's name in its place and sent a war fleet to the North African coast.

Obaidullah Mahdi sent a war fleet under Husain bin Ali bin Khazir's command to defend the coast. The fleets clashed and Ibn Khazir had killed and Obaidullah Mahdi's fleet was destroyed by the ships from Sicily.

When the news reached Baghdad, Caliph Muqtadir dispatched black robes and flags to Ahmad bin Mohib and for one year the name of the Abbasid Caliph was read in the Friday sermon in Sicily. Obaidullah Mahdi prepared a powerful war fleet and sent it to Sicily, which broke Ahmad bin Mohib's power. The people of Sicily arrested him and sent him along with his men to Obaidullah Mahdi and he begged for forgiveness. Obaidullah Mahdi ordered Ahmad bin Mohib and his men to be taken to Ibn Khazir grave and killed. This occurred in 300 A.H.

### **The Oath for the Heir to the Throne**

In 301 A.H., Muqtadir declared as heir to the throne his 4-year-old son Abul Abbas first with his title Qahir Billah. He then made him Governor of Egypt and the Western territories and sent him to Egypt under tutelage of his servant Munis.

The same year Hasan bin Ali bin Husain bin Ali bin Omer bin Ali bin Husain bin Ali bin Abi Talib who was known as Atroosh, captured the

province of Tabristan. Atroosh worked hard inviting the people of Tabristan and Delam to Islam, the people of these regions embraced Islam by virtue of his sermons and this increased his power until he was able to capture Tabristan.

Atroosh was a Shi'ite by religion and those who became Muslims due to his efforts took it as their faith. The administrators of Khorasan invaded Tabristan and killed Atroosh in 304 A.H.

In 302 A.H., Obaidullah Mahdi sent his General Khafasha Katami to invade Alexandria. Munis who had already reached Egypt fought against him. After several fierce battles, Mahdi's army retreated and fled back to their territory losing 7,000 men.

In 307 A.H., Obaidullah Mahdi gave a big army to his son Abul Qasim and sent him to launch an attack on Egypt. In suffered defeat at the hands of Munis he returned after many of their commanders were captured.

The same year the Roman king made peace with Muqtadir Billah and in order to strengthen the ties of friendship sent his ambassadors to Baghdad for whose reception grand arrangements were made. In 308 A.H., Obaidullah's army captured a part of Egypt.

### **Qaramata's Uprising in Iraq**

A group of Qaramata's followers had taken possession of Bahrain as has been stated above. One night in 311 A.H., Qaramata's commander Abu Tahir Sulaiman bin Abi Sayeed Janani, supported by 1,700 men, invaded Basra. By putting ladders against the walls of the city they climbed over them killed the guards, opened the city gate and began a general massacre.

When the Governor of Basra, Subuk Muflihi, got the news, he came out to face him but was killed by Qaramata. Abu Tahir captured Basra, stayed there for 17 days, looted cash and goods, captured women and children and left for Hajar on the 18th day. Caliph Muqtadir heard about this disaster, gave the letter of Governorship to Muhammad bin Abdullah Farooqi and sent him there. Muhammad bin Abdullah reached there after Abu Tahir had left.

In 312 A.H., Abu Tahir took an army and looted the caravans of the pilgrims' returning from Makkah and captured Abul Hija bin Hamdani and Muqtadir Billah's maternal uncle Ahmad bin Badr who were with those caravans.

He released them after a few days and demanded the city of Ahwaz. When Caliph Muqtadir refused, Abu Tahir re-started looting the caravans. He sent an army, which was defeated by Abu Tahir. He chased them up to Kufa and after capturing it, stayed there for six days and returned to Hajar with a huge quantity of cash and goods.

No one dared to perform Hajj for fear of Qaramata in 313 A.H. In 314 A.H., Caliph Muqtadir recalled Yusuf bin Abu Saj from Azerbaijan and made him the ruler of the eastern countries and asked him to fight against Abu Tahir and the Qaramata. There was no confrontation that year. In Ramadan 315 A.H., Abu Tahir along with his army went to Kufa. Yusuf left Wasit to save Kufa but Abu Tahir reached Kufa a day earlier and captured it. Yusuf came and started a battle. His army was defeated by Abu Tahir and retreated. Yusuf was wounded and captured. Abu Tahir deputed a physician for his treatment.

When the news reached Baghdad, Caliph sent Munis. Abu Tahir had left for Ain Tarr before Munis reached there. Abu Tahir left Kufa, captured Ambar and put the army to rout. Finally, Nasr Hajib left Baghdad, joined Munis and with 40,000 soldiers attacked the Qaramata but they were defeated. Abu Tahir killed Yusuf who was in captivity.

This defeat sent shock waves throughout Baghdad. The people began to leave for safer places. In the beginning, Abu Tahir left Ambar, looted Rahba and for one day and one night, he declared the killings of the people of Rahba as lawful.

The inhabitants of Qarqisya watched the horrible sight of the massacre and begged for amnesty, which was granted by Abu Tahir. He then sent military units to various areas to launch night attacks. After three days of continued fighting, he conquered Riqqah and was firmly established in the province of Jazirah. Armies left Baghdad to fight with him but in vain.

In 316 A.H., Qaramata went to Hajar. Then after a few days, they caused terror in Sawad, Wasit and Ain Tarr. Caliph Muqtadir

deputed Haroon bin Ghuraib, Safi Basri and Ibn Qais to punish them. Qaramata's groups were vanquished and they fled and peace was restored there.

### **Roman Tyranny**

In 314 A.H., the Romans conquered Lamtiyah. In 315 A.H., they captured Dimyat, plundered the city and had the horn sounded in the central mosque (the horn being an insult). The same year the inhabitants of Delam invaded Rayy and Gibal and killed thousands of men, the Romans captured Khalat, removed the place for giving the sermon from the grand mosque and put a cross in its place and made it into a Church.

### **Deposition and Restoration of Muqtadir**

In 317 A.H., Munis alias Muzaffar deposed Muqtadir. Muqtadir wanted to appoint Haroon bin Ghuraib Hajib in place of Munis. When Munis found out, he took an army and most of the members of the government and invaded the palace, arrested Muqtadir and installed as caliph Muhammad bin Muqtadir with the title Qahir Billah. Everyone took the oath for his Caliphate and the Governors were duly informed by letter.

The next day the army created a scene because of a delay in their reward money. They went to Munis's house in search of Muqtadir, bringing him out they put him on their shoulders and took him to the palace and brought Qahir Billah to him under arrest. Seeing him Muqtadir said, "Don't be afraid. You were not at fault." The people were pacified. Then Governors were again informed that Muqtadir Billah was the Caliph as before. Muqtadir pleased them by bestowing on them gifts and honor.

### **Qaramata's Atrocities in Makkah**

Qaramata's rule in Bahrain was firmly established. Their commander was Abu Tahir. They read the name of Obaidullah Mahdi, the ruler of Africa, in their Friday sermon and recognized him as their caliph. In 318 A.H., Abu Tahir went to Makkah with his army during the season



of Hajj. Mansoor Delami was sent as leader of the pilgrimage from Baghdad. He reached Makkah safely on 8 Thul Hijjah. Abu Tahir arrived on 9 Thul Hijjah and immediately after his arrival began to slay the Hujjaj and loot their belongings.

He did not hesitate in killing people even inside the holy sanctuary of the Ka'bah and threw the dead bodies in the well of Zamzam, removed the Black Stone from the wall of the Ka'bah and broke its door.

Muhammad bin Rabi bin Sulaiman says: "I was present in Makkah during the disaster. I saw a man climb on the roof of the Ka'bah to pull down the arch. I said, O Allah! I cannot stand the sight. That man's feet slipped he fell down and died instantly." Abu Tahir looted the people of Makkah for 11 days, loaded the black stone on a camel and started for Hajr (the capital of Bahrain). 40 camels one after another died carrying the black stone between Makkah and Hajr. It remained under Qaramata's possession for 22 years. He was offered 50,000 dinars for it but he would not part with it.

At the end of Motiullah's caliphate, the black stone was taken back from him and set in the Ka'bah again. On the return journey, only a single camel carried it from Hajr to Makkah. When these atrocities and desecrations were narrated to the ruler of North Africa, Obaidullah he wrote a denunciatory letter to Abu Tahir and insisted the return the goods to the Makkans. Abu Tahir returned part of the goods but he did not return the black stone. It was not put back in its place until 339 A.H.

### **Murder of Muqtadir Billah**

Munis captured Mousil in Safar 320 A.H and put to rout Sayeed and Dawood the sons of Abdullah bin Hamdan and their nephew Nasiruddaulah Husain bin Abdullah bin Hamdan who were sent to defend Mousil. Then the armies of Baghdad, Syria and Egypt joined Munis because the soldiers were pleased with his generous gifts.

Nasiruddaulah bin Abdullah bin Hamdan joined Munis and stayed with him in Mousil. Nine days after the conquest of Mousil, Munis invaded Baghdad. Intense dissention arose between him and the ministers of the government.

After being defeated Sayeed bin Abdullah went to Baghdad. At the

receipt of the news of Munis's attack, armies under the commands of chiefs like Sayeed bin Abdullah bin Hamdan, Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Yaqut and others were sent. When Munis's army approached, the defending soldiers ran back to Baghdad. Without an army, the commanders also went back to Baghdad. Munis reached Baghdad and stayed at one of the city's gates known as Shamasyah. Both sides built fortifications and the battle began. Muqtadir came out and stood on a hillock and the army was fighting in front of him.

The Baghdad army suffered defeat. The Caliph's companions said to him. "Please don't stand in this place. Let us go back." He started to go but was surrounded by a group of Berbers who had joined Munis's army. One of the Berbers shot an arrow that hit Muqtadir. He fell off the horse and the same Berber rushed forward and chopped off his head. He was stripped naked and his body was left there and his head was taken to Munis on the point of a spear. This took place on Tuesday 27 Shawwal 320 A.H.

Munis put Abu Mansoor Muhammad bin Motazid on the throne and chose for him the title Qahir Billah. Ali bin Maqlah was made the minister and Ali bin Baleeq was appointed Hajib. Muqtadir's mother was arrested and forced to part with her money then she was beaten to death. In this way, money was collected from the people by force.

### **Qahir Billah**

Qahir Billah bin Motazid Billah bin Mawaffiq Billah bin Motawakkil was born of a slave-girl named Fitnah. His name was Muhammad and his kunya was Abu Mansoor.

After the murder of Caliph Muqtadir, his son Abdul Wahid along with Haroon bin Ghuraib, Muhammad bin Yaqut and Ibrahim bin Raiq had gone to Madain. He came to Ahwaz via Wasit and Sus. Qahir Billah gave an army to Ali bin Baleeq and sent it to arrest Abdul Wahid and his men.

Consequently, through the efforts of the army commanders and through correspondence Abdul Wahid and his men begged Munis and Qahir Billah for amnesty, which was readily granted and they all went to Baghdad.

The Caliph made Muhammad bin Yaqut his companion which was disliked by the minister Ali bin Maqla. He misguided Munis by telling him that Muhammad bin Yaqut had been trying to ruin him. Munis ordered Baleeq and his son Ali bin Baleeq that caliph to be kept under constant surveillance. Even women visiting the Caliph's palace were body-searched and basically no one was allowed to enter the palace. When the caliph realized that he was under surveillance and rendered powerless, he started conspiring with some army chiefs against Munis.

Munis and his supporters began to make preparations to depose the Caliph and make Abu Ahmad bin Muktafi the caliph. Qahir Billah succeeded in his attempts. Ali bin Baleeq and Munis were arrested and killed. Muhammad bin Yaqut and Abu Jafar Muhammad bin Qasim bin Obaidullah were appointed Hajib and minister respectively. This happened in Shaban 321 A.H.

During the same period, they started looking for Ahmad bin Muktafi who had gone into hiding. He was eventually arrested and buried alive in a wall. The houses of the dead were razed to the ground and their belongings confiscated. After ruling for three and a half months as minister, Abu Jafar was censured and jailed. He died after 18 days in captivity.

## **The Origin of the Buwayhid Dynasty**

As the members of the Buwayhid dynasty are going to be mentioned repeatedly in connection with the Abbasid caliphs, it is pertinent to record the early history of this dynasty. Mention of Atroosh, Hasan bin Ali Zainul Abedeen has already been made. Following Muhammad bin Zaid Alawi's death, Atroosh went to Delam and preached Islam to the people there and continued this missionary work continuously for 13 years in Delam, Tabristan and Egypt and he induced many of them to embrace Islam.

During that time, the ruler of Delam was Hassan. He tried to stop the growing influence of Atroosh but to no avail. Atroosh had mosques built and had the people act upon the Islamic tenets and started collecting taxes. Finally, he formed a body of the converts and armed them. They invaded Qazween and Saloos the border cities, invited the people to Islam and admitted them into the Islamic fold.

The state of Tabristan was a part of the Samani territory. The Samani ruler of Tabristan began to oppress the people. Atroosh goaded the people of Delam to launch an offensive against Tabristan. In 301 A.H., Atroosh formed an army of the Delam people and attacked Tabristan and put to rout the ruler Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Salook and captured Tabristan.

After Atroosh, his son-in-law Hasan bin Qasim and his descendants captured and ruled over Tabristan, Jurjan, Saryah Amud and Usturabad. Their army commanders were all from Delam. Among them was Lail bin Noman whom Hasan bin Qasim had appointed the ruler of Jurjan. Lail bin Noman was killed while fighting with the Samanis in 309 A.H. After that, the Samanis led several offensives against Bani Atroosh. Those attacks were repulsed by Surkhab, a Delami general, who lost his life in the battle. Surkhab's uncle Makan Ibn Kane Delami ruled over Usturabad on behalf of Bani Atroosh.

Makan collected round him his compatriots from Delam and formed an army and brought Jurjan under his control. One of the Delamis who helped him was the famous chief Asfar bin Shairwaih Delami. Makan set up an independent government and annexed major parts of Tabristan. He got angry with Shairwaih on some issues and expelled him. He then went to Bakr bin Muhammad bin Yasi in Nishapur who was the ruler there on behalf of the Samanis.

Bakr bin Muhammad gave Asfar an army and sent him to conquer Jurjan. Makan lived in Tabristan and his brother Abul Hasan bin Kani was made the ruler there. Abu Ali bin Atroosh was also there and he had no territory to rule over. One day Abu Ali had a deadly opportunity and killed Abul Hasan and the Delami army, which was stationed at Jurjan, took the oath for Abu Ali. Abu Ali then deputed Ali bin Khursheed Delami as ruler of Jurjan.

At this time, Asfar with an army from the Samanis reached near to Jurjan. Ali bin Khursheed wrote to Asfar: "Instead of invading us why don't you join us and attack Makan who is in Tabristan? Asfar sought Bakr bin Muhammad's permission and he agreed.

When Makan bin Kani found out, he took an army from Tabristan and marched to Jurjan. Ali bin Khursheed and Asfar put up a joint

resistance and put him to rout and captured Tabristan. Shortly after that both Ali bin Khursheed and Abu Ali bin Atroosh died and Asfar ruled over Tabristan without facing any resistance. Makan took this opportunity and attacked Asfar and gained control over Tabristan. Asfar went to Bakr bin Muhammad in Jurjan.

When Bakr bin Muhammad died in 315 A.H., the Samani ruler deputed Asfar to administrate Jurjan. Among Asfar's commanders was Mardawih whom he gave an army and sent him to invade Tabristan. Makan arrayed his forces but lost the battle and Mardawih captured Tabristan. Makan fled and went to Atroosh's son-in-law, Hasan bin Qasim in Rayy.

Having gained control over Tabristan and Jurjan, Asfar introduced in the Friday sermon the name of the ruler of Khorasan and Mawaraunnahr, Nasr bin Ahmad bin Saman. Then he went to Rayy and liberated it. Makan became a landless and went to the mountains of Tabristan. Asfar's rule over the provinces of Rayy, Qazween, Zanjan, Abharqam and Karkh was firmly established and he governed this vast territory very successfully. Asfar decided to be an independent ruler so he revolted against the Samani King and declared his independence.

Hearing this Caliph Muqtadir gave an army to Haroon bin Ghuraib and sent him to take these territories from Asfar but Haroon was defeated. Then Nasr bin Ahmad Samani left Bukhara with an army to punish Asfar. Asfar begged to be excused and promised to pay the taxes. Nasr granted his petition for amnesty and allowed him to retain the Province of Rayy while Nasr returned to Bukhara.

Mardawih, one of Asfar's commanders persuaded other commanders to join him and rebel. He killed Asfar, annexed Hamadan and Isfahan and began to rule over that territory. He called Makan bin Kani and deputed him to govern Tabristan and Jurjan. Then he deposed Makan. Makan went to Delam, collected a group of fighters and invaded Tabristan but was defeated by Mardawih and he fled to Nishapur.

In 319 A.H., Mardawih decided to secure the recognition of his conquered territories from the Abbasid Caliph. He therefore sent an application to the Caliph's court to grant him the letter of

governorship of the territories he held in exchange for the payment of two hundred thousand dinars annually. The Caliph granted the application and sent the letter of authorization and gave him another landed estate on his own accord. In 320 A.H., Mardawih called his brother Dashmagir from Gilan. In Dashmagir's territory Abu Shuja Buwayh's three sons were in charge of the boats in that area and it is because of them that these details are being given.

Abu Shuja Buwayh Delami was a very poor fisherman. He eked out his living by catching fish. One night he dreamed that he squatted down to urinate and a flame came out of his penis, which spread and lit the whole world. He interpreted that his descendents would be kings of the area covered by the light. Then three sons were born to him Ali, Hasan and Ahmad. Because these three brothers made much progress later on and chose for their titles Imaduddaulah, Ruknuddaulah and Mu'izzuddaulah and became respectable rulers, some linked their lineage to the King of Iran, Yazd Jurd and some called them the descendents of Bahram Gaur. People generally try to attach wealth and kingship to nobility of birth and sycophants generally prove most useful in connecting power to an impressive family tree.

The act of the three sons of Buwayh the fisherman acquiring wealth and becoming rulers and then linking their lineage to the Iranian kings is not unusual but their real origins are as stated.

When Makan bin Kani recruited the inhabitants of Delam into his army, Buwayh's three sons were amongst them. When Makan met with failure, most of his men went over to Mardawih. Mardawih granted them great honor and appointed them to higher posts than they really deserved. Buwayh's three sons also benefited from this. By virtue of their service, alertness and skill they endeared themselves to him. Mardawih deputed Ali bin Buwayh to rule over Karkh. His younger brothers Hasan and Ahmad also went with him. At that time, Rayy was ruled over by Mardawih's brother Dashmagir. Dashmagir had made Husain bin Muhammad known as Umaid his minister. When Ali bin Buwayh arrived in Rayy, he called on Umaid and presented him with a mule. Then he went to Karkh and began to rule.

When Mardawih was informed of the meeting between Ali bin

Buwayh and Umaid and the presentation of the mule, a doubt crossed his mind thinking that the chiefs coming from Makan, who were given good posts and made rulers of cities, might conspire against him and become a problem. Therefore, he wrote to his brother Dashmagir to arrest all those who came from Makan and who were assigned to govern the cities there. Some were arrested but Ali bin Buwayh who had occupied Karkh was not arrested for fear of possible riots.

Ali bin Buwayh captured several forts in the vicinity of Karkh and whatever money and goods he collected in booty he distributed among his soldiers. This endeared him to them. Respect for him and his influence began to rise. In 321 A.H., Mardawih released all those who were under house arrest in Rayy. All of them went to Ali bin Buwayh in Karkh and he honored them.

During the same period a Delami chief, Sherzad, along with a group visited Ali bin Buwayh and induced him to invade Isfahan. When Mardawih found out that all the Delamis had gathered around Ali bin Buwayh, he wrote to send him all the chiefs who had been released. Ali bin Buwayh refused to comply with the order and began to make preparations to invade Isfahan in coalition with Sherzad. Isfahan was being ruled over by Mozaffar bin Yaqut and Abu Ali bin Rustam. Both of them were angry with the Caliph and had rebelled against him.

Ali bin Buwayh invaded Isfahan and put Mozaffar bin Yaqut to rout. Abu Ali bin Rustam died and Ali bin Buwayh gained control over Isfahan. This news plunged Mardawih into a deep anxiety because by then Ali bin Buwayh's power had grown considerably. He sent his brother Dashmagir with an army to Isfahan to punish and discipline Ali bin Buwayh. After receiving this information, Ali left Isfahan and captured Jurjan. This occurred in Thul Hijjah 321 A.H.

Dashmagir captured Isfahan but then handed over Isfahan to Mozaffar bin Yaqut to govern it. Ali bin Buwayh sent his brother Hasan to Gazroon to collect the taxes. He came across Muzaffar bin Yaqut's army on way and defeated it. He collected the taxes and returned to his brother.

Ali bin Buwayh set out towards Astakhar. Ibn Yaqut chased him with a big army and challenged him to fight. They fought and Ali bin

Buwayh's brother Ahmad showed extraordinary valor. Muzaffar bin Yaqut lost and retreated to Wasit. Ali bin Buwayh came to Shiraz and captured it and the whole of Iran came under his control. The soldiers whose number had now considerably increased demanded their salaries. Ali did not have enough money to meet their requirements. In a pensive mood, he lay down on the roof of a house. A snake fell off the roof. He ordered the house to be pulled down. When they started demolishing it, boxes full of gold were found. He distributed all the gold among his soldiers. He sent for a tailor to have some new clothes made. The guards brought a tailor who thought he was being arrested. Immediately he said, "I have nothing except a few boxes that I am holding for someone and I have not opened them and do not know their contents." Those boxes were brought and they were found to contain gold coins. Ali bin Buwayh confiscated them too. All this wealth had been left by Muzaffar bin Yaqut who could not carry it with him. By luck during the same period, he discovered the accumulated treasure of the kings of the Saffar Dynasty, which totaled five hundred thousand red dinars.

During the same period, one day he was riding on horseback and the horse's legs sank into the ground. He had the horse's legs dug out and a treasure was found there. In this way, he accumulated a huge treasury and began to rule over Iran very successfully and continued increasing his power rivaling Mardawih and he became a source of great danger for him.

### **Over Throw of Qahir**

Qahir Billah was a killer, hasty, a chronic drunk and a man of mercurial nature. He had clamped a total ban on drinking and selling of wine. After ruling for one and a half years he was arrested by military rioters on 6 Jumad Thani 322 A.H., they put Abul Abbas Muhammad bin Muqtadir on the throne and gave him the title of Radi Billah. Immediately after assuming power, Radi Billah had Qahir Billah blinded.

According to Ali bin Muhammad Khorasani, one day Qahir Billah came to me with a spear in his hand and asked me to describe to him the habits and nature of every Caliph of the Abbasids. I said, "Saffah



was quick to spill blood and his governors followed in his footsteps. He was a brave and believed in collecting taxes. Mansoor was the first to sow the seed of dissention between the Banu Abbas and the family of Abi Talib and did not let them remain as one. He was the first to have made the astrologers his companions. Suryani and non-Arabic books like geometry, Kalilah Dimnah and books in Greek were translated for him. Mahdi was very generous and a just man and whatever his father had seized from the people, he returned it to them. He had the apostates killed and rebuilt mosques on the three holy sites in Makkah, Madinah and Jerusalem. Hadi was a tyrant and proud and his governors followed suit. Haroon Rasheed fought the Romans and performed Hajj, he had rest houses and water tanks constructed on the way to Madinah, populated Tartoots, Masisah and Marash and he pleased the people. He was the first among the caliphs who played polo, chess and enjoyed shooting. Ameen was generous and tolerant but was drowned in pleasures. Mamoon was overwhelmed by astrology and philosophy. He was generous and wise. Mutasim was the same and was fond of horseback riding and imitating the non-Arab kings. He fought in battles and had many conquests to his credit. Wathiq followed his father's life style. Motawakkil went against Mamoon, Mutaism and Wathiq. He was against their beliefs and ordered the opposing scholars to be given the opportunity to speak on these subjects and the people were generally pleased with him." Qahir continued to ask about the other Caliphs and I kept telling him about them. He was very pleased to hear their history.

### **Radi Billah**

The name of Radi Billah bin Muqtadir Billah was Muhammad and his kunya was Abul Abbas. He was born of a Roman slave girl named Zaloom. He was enthroned on Jumad Thani 322 A.H. following the deposition of Qahir. He was brought from the jail and put on the throne. He appointed Ali bin Maqlah as his Prime Minister. He arrested Muhammad bin Yaqut and imprisoned him. His father, Yaqut was in Wasit at that time. He arrayed his forces and went to fight against Ali bin Buwayh but lost. The same year Obaidullah Mahdi, the ruler of North Africa, died after ruling for 25 years. He was succeeded by his son Abul Qasim with the title Biamrillah.

## **Murder of Mardawih**

As stated above, Mardawih captured the province of Rayy, Isfahan, and Ahwaz and obtained the documents authorizing him from the Caliph's court. He then claimed to be an independent ruler and made a throne of gold, the chairs of the generals and commanders were made of silver, he wore a crown and called himself emperor. He made preparations to invade Iraq and Baghdad and said that he would rebuild the palaces of the Persian emperors and would reestablish the Zoroastrian kingdom after wiping out the Arabs. This controversial talk displeased some of his commanders and he was murdered near Isfahan in 323 A.H.

## **Condition of the Provinces**

Caliph Radi Billah's government was confined to Baghdad and its vicinity only. Independent rulers, who had acquired documents authorizing their rule on the promise of paying taxes, had gone back on their promises. Basra was under the domination of Muhammad Ra'iq and Khuzistan and Ahwaz were under Abu Abdullah Buraidi. Iran was ruled over by Ali bin Buwayh with the title Imaduddaulah while Kerman was controlled by Abu Ali bin Ilyas. Hasan bin Buwayh with the title Ruknuddaulah and Mardawih's brother Dashmagir were at war with each other in Rayy, Isfahan and the mountain provinces. Mousil, Deyar Bakr, Deyar Egypt, Deyar Rabi'iyah were under the rule of Muhammad bin Tafaj and some parts of Mawaraunnahr were under the Bani Saman rulers. Abu Tahir Qaramati governed Bahrain and Yamamah and the Delam commanders had captured Tabristan while independent states in Andalus, Morocco and North Africa had existed for many years:

In the very first year of Radi Billah's enthronement Imaduddaulah Ali bin Buwayh applied for the documents of authorization for the province of Iran, the caliph sent the document, a royal robe with a flag and the title of Imaduddaulah. He conferred the titles of Ruknuddaulah and Muizzuddaulah to his brothers Hasan and Ahmad respectively. After Mardawih's death, his army was divided

into two parts one part went to Imaduddaulah in Iran while the other remained under one of his former commanders named Yahkum.

Yahkum arrived in the Caliph's court and enhanced his influence and was able by manipulation to dominate over all the leaders who kept the caliph's court under their control. He received the title of Amirul Omara, and imposed himself on the caliph and his court and began to act like the ruler. Dashmagir Mardawih's brother left Isfahan to Ruknuddaulah bin Buwayh and captured Azerbaijan. Ruknuddaulah bin Buwayh and Muizzuddaulah bin Buwayh captured Isfahan and Ahwaz respectively. Muhammad bin Ra'iq snatched Syria from Muhammad bin Tafaj leaving only Egypt for him. During Radi's regime, the caliphate was only a figurehead. During the last period, Yahkum completely dominated the caliph and his court and no one dared to oppose him. He himself lived in Wasit and his head clerk worked as the Prime Minister in the Caliph's court in Baghdad.

### **Death of Radi Billah**

Having ruled for about seven years Caliph Radi Billah died of dropsy in Rabia Awwal 329 A.H. Hearing this news Yahkum gave instructions to his head clerk and in accordance with his orders Ibrahim bin Motazid Billah with the title Muttaqi lillah was enthroned as caliph on 29 Rabia Awwal 329 A.H.

During Radi Billah's regime, Muhammad bin Ali-Shalmaghani known as Ibn Al-Arrafa appeared and claimed to be divine. Many became his disciples but in the very first year of Radi's caliphate, he was caught and killed along with his followers who would not recant his claims. The same year Qaramata looted and plundered Baghdad and Makkah to such an extent that the inhabitants of Baghdad did not perform Hajj and none of them dared go to Hajj until 327 A.H.

n 327 A.H., Abu Tahir Qaramati levied a five dinar tax per camel on the Hujjas. That was the first time pilgrims had to pay a tax for Hajj. The inhabitants of Baghdad paid the tax and performed their Hajj comfortably. Radi was the last caliph who read the Friday sermon himself, all the caliphs after him assigned this job to others.

### **Muttaqlillah**

Muttaqlillah bin Motazid Billah bin Mawaffiq bin Motawakkil was born of a slave girl named, Zahrah. He came to the throne when he was 34. On 26 Rajab 329 A.H., Yahkum was killed by Kurds in the neighborhood of Wasit. He kept the title Amirul Omara' for 2 years and 8 months. Following his death goods worth 1,100,000 dinars were seized and deposited in the Caliph's treasury. In Shaban 329 A.H. Abu Obadiah Buraidi took an army from Basra and went to Baghdad. The Caliph ordered him to go back and when he did not obey, the Caliph sent an army. The army was put to rout and Buraidi entered Baghdad and demanded 500,000 dinars from the Caliph with the message that if he did not concede to his demand, he would be deposed and put to death. The Caliph felt helpless and paid the ransom.

After 24 days in Ramadan 329 A.H. Buraidi's army revolted because of non-receipt of their salaries. Buraidi fled and went to Wasit. After his flight, a chief named Kortageen dominated the caliph and his court. He received the title Amirul Omara. Baghdad at this time had a large group of people from Delam in addition to the Turks. The Delamis had started growing in power since Yahkum's rise to power. The Delamis created an uprising against Kortageen but his power remained unaffected.

Hearing this, Muhammad bin Raiq who ruled over Syria went to Baghdad to secure the post of Amirul Omara. Kortageen came out of Baghdad to face him. Raiq entered Baghdad by force and Kortageen was arrested and imprisoned. The Caliph made Ibn Raiq Amirul Omara. Muhammad bin Raiq collected taxes from Abu Abdullah Buraidi by force.

In Rabia Thani 330 A.H., Ibn Buraidi invaded Baghdad and defeated Ibn Raiq. Buraidi's army was made up of Turks and the soldiers from Delam. They entered the city and started looting and killing. The Caliph along with Ibn Raiq and his own son Abu Mansoor fled to Mousil. They looted the caliph's palace and the houses of Baghdad. Some Qaramati also joined in looting. The nobles of the city were subjected to great humiliation and torture. On the arrival of the Caliph,

the ruler of Mousil, Nasiruddaulah bin Hamdan, left the city. The Caliph and Ibn Raiq consoled him and called him back. Nasiruddaulah killed Muhammad bin Raiq. The Caliph gave Nasiruddaulah the title of Amirul Omara while his brother Abui Hasan was given the title Saifuddaulah.

Preparing the army Nasiruddaulah and the Caliph moved to Baghdad. Ibn Buraidi who had captured Baghdad fought but was defeated in Shawwal 330 A.H. and Nasiruddaulah entered Baghdad with the caliph. Nasiruddaulah and Saifuddaulah lived with the caliph for 11 months. Then they returned to Mousil. In Ramadan 331 A.H., a commander named Tuzoon acquired power in Baghdad and the caliph gave him the title of Amirul Omara.

In Muharram 332 A.H., Abu Jafar Sherzad entered Baghdad while Tuzoon was in Wasit. When Abu Jafar entered Baghdad caliph Muttaqi left Baghdad and fled to Mousil out of fear of him. Tuzoon and Abu Jafar jointly invaded Mousil and defeated both the brothers Nasiruddaulah and Saifuddaulah and they along with the caliph went to Nasiban and from there to Riqqah he wrote a letter to Tuzoon and reconciled with Banu Hamdan and returned to Baghdad. The caliph along with Banu Hamdan stayed on in Riqqah.

During the same period, Muizzuddaulah Ahmad bin Buwayh who controlled Ahwaz invaded Wasit. Tuzoon returned from Mousil and fought against him on 17 Thul Qada 332 A.H. Though Muizzuddaulah suffered defeat in the fight, he re-invaded Wasit and conquered it. In 332 A.H., The Russians invaded Barua an Azerbaijani town on the Russian border. Marzaban Delam heard of this and sent his forces there. The Russians plundered and killed the Muslims on a large scale. The Muslims rallied and fought back. The fight continued for a long time and after many fierce battles the Muslims forced the Russians to retreat.

### **Deposition of Caliph Muttaqi**

Caliph Muttaqi lived with Banu Hamdan until the end of 332 A.H. Meanwhile resentment developed between them. The caliph wrote letters for help to Baghdad and to Akhsheed bin Muhammad bin Tafaj in Egypt. Akhsheed visited the caliph in Riqqah on 15 Muharram 333 A.H. and requested him to accompany him to Egypt and live there.

The minister approved of the idea and described to him the benefits of making Egypt his capital. But the caliph did not agree to it. In the meantime, Tuzoon's letter from Baghdad came granting amnesty and security to the caliph and his minister Ibn Sherzad. The caliph expressed his sense of joy after going through the contents of the letter and leaving Akhsheed, he set out to Baghdad at the end of Muharram 333 A.H. Tuzoon received him warmly at Sandyah and lodged him in his tent. The next day he blinded the caliph with hot pokers. Then he sent for Abul Qasim Abdullah bin Muktafi Billah. All the members of the government took the oath for him and called him Mustakfi Billah.

The deposed caliph Muttaqi was also presented in the court and he also took the oath for caliph Mustakfi. Muttaqi was imprisoned in Jazirah. After remaining in that state of suffering for 25 years, he died in 357 A.H. When Qahir Billah was informed of Muttaqi's blindness, he was overjoyed and began to say, "Now we two have become blind and the third is waiting." Ironically after a few days, Mustakfi also met the same fate.

### **Mustakfi Billah**

Abul Qasim Abdullah bin Mustakfi Billah was born of a slave girl Amlaahunnas. He came to the throne in Safar 333 A.H. at the age of 41. Abul Qasim Fadl bin Muqtadir Billah also made a claim to the caliphate. He went underground Mustakfi searched for him but he could not be found. He remained in hiding during his regime. When Mustakfi failed to locate him, he had his house demolished.

Soon after caliph Mustakfi's enthronement Tuzoon died. Mustakfi conferred the title of Amirul Omara on Abu Jafar Ibn Sherzad. Having taken power into his hands, he began to squander money until the treasury became empty and the entire administration was thrown into disarray. Theft and robbery were committed with such impunity that the civilians began to desert the city and migrate.

### **A Note**

The area and size of the Islamic government continued to grow during the regime of Banu Umayyah. The Islamic government had a single capital and whatever instruction were issued from the caliph's court

in Damascus, were carried out in all territories from Andalus and Morocco to China and Turkistan. When the Islamic caliphate came to Banu Abbas, within a very short time, a separate and independent government of Banu Umayyah was established in Andalus and instead of one capital, there were two centers of the Islamic government. Then Morocco became independent. After that, the governments of Mawaraunnahr, Khorasan, and Persia went out of the control of the caliph of Baghdad. At this point in the narrative, the government of the caliph of Baghdad did not exist even in Baghdad itself. For a long time the state of the Tigris and Euphrates was under the caliph's rule. However, when the post of the Amirul Omara (chief of the chiefs) was created, its government was run by the Amirul Omara he called himself the subordinate of the caliph but in name only.

The caliph's orders were honored in the city of Baghdad proper. However, anybody who could subdue others by virtue of their power could become the Amirul Omara and the caliph would be forced to confer on him this title. Though the caliph had no power left in his hands, he enjoyed a bit of liberty and still commanded a sort of admiration and respect.

Muizzuddaulah Ahmad bin Buwayh, the fisherman's son came from Ahwaz and dominated over Baghdad and the caliph. He was given the title Malik (king) and others after him continue to enjoy this privilege. Muizzuddaulah put the caliph under strict surveillance and kept him as a respectable captive and seized the little respect he enjoyed in Baghdad. The caliph's duty was to greet ambassadors from abroad, the ambassador would be presented before the Caliph and shown a magnificent exhibition at the artificial court the Caliph would be used and exploited to serve their purpose. Conferring of titles and granting of documents were generally done by the caliph but without option. The actual decisions were made by the Malik alone.

The caliph was a figurehead only. The Malik used to fix the caliph's salary. When he received his salary late or did not receive it, he had to sell his personal belongings to meet his daily needs. The condition of the Abbasid caliphs had deteriorated to such an extent that it has become redundant for a historian to mention them, except for the word Caliph nothing else remained of their power. In order to

complete the history of the Islamic governments it is essential to record the lives and conquests of the rulers who not only ruled in Baghdad but also the area of the Euphrates and Tigris and other provinces as those controlled by the Malik. In order to deal with the conditions of these territories we will continue with the Abbasid caliphs though they are no more than figureheads, they are still called caliphs.

The important point is that now we are not studying the Abbasid caliphs but those who were in control of Baghdad. We should not overlook the fact that though separate and independent governments were formed and established in provinces all over the Islamic territories, all still honored the institution of the caliph. His name was mentioned in the Friday sermons even where he had no power.

In Andalus, the Umayyah caliphate was in power. The Fatimids in North Africa claimed the caliphate and leadership and the name of the caliph of Baghdad was never mentioned in Andalus or North Africa. Besides these exceptions in all other Islamic territories, they recognized the Abbasid caliph of Baghdad as caliph and their religious leader. Sometimes a particular Malik would expunge the name of the caliph from the Friday sermon and have his own name mentioned in it but the caliph's name did exist in the sermons of the other territories.

### **The Buwayhid (Buyid) Dynasty in Baghdad**

The Buwayh dynasty has been dealt with above Buwayh's three sons Ali, Hasan and Ahmad had become rulers. Ali (Imaduddaulah) controlled Persia, Hasan (Ruknuddaulah) ruled over Isfahan and Tabristan while Ahmad (Muizzuddaulah) had captured Ahwaz. During Sherzad's term as Amirul Omara, riots erupted in Baghdad and Muizzuddaulah invaded it.

Sherzad escaped and went to Banu Hamdan in Mousil and Muizzuddaulah captured Baghdad easily. Caliph Mustakfi gave him the title of Malik. Muizzuddaulah then had coins minted in his name and began to rule over Baghdad with a heavy hand. After some time he was informed that caliph Mustakfi was conspiring against him. On that occasion, the ambassador of the governor of Khorasan arrived and an open court was held. Muizzuddaulah beckoned to two



Delamis and they moved forward. The caliph thought that they were going to kiss his hand so he extended it. They caught hold of his hand and pulled him down from the throne and arrested him. No one dared to utter a word.

Muizzuddaulah went home. The Delamis brought the caliph by dragging and humiliating him to Muizzuddaulah. He blinded him and put him under house arrest. This occurred in Jumad Awwal 334 A.H. Caliph Mustakfi remained caliph for one year as four months in name only. He died in this state of captivity in 338 A.H.

### **Muti lillah**

Muizzuddaulah bin Buwayh was the youngest son of Buwayh. Because they had embraced Islam through Atroosh, all Delamis were Shiites. The Buwayh dynasty surpassed all other Shiites in excesses and prejudice. Having humiliated, deposed, imprisoned and blinded Mustakfi, Muizzuddaulah wanted to enthrone an Alawi. However, one of his advisers prevented him from doing so and convinced him saying, "If you make an Alawi caliph, all the people would believe that he deserved to be caliph and they would prefer to obey that Alawi caliph instead of you. Whatever influence you have on the Delamis, it would not last nor would your government and glory survive. It is better to put an Abbasid on the throne so that all the Shiites will consider him to be undeserving and will be loyal and obedient to you in this way Shiite power will continue in Baghdad."

Therefore, Muizzuddaulah called in Abul Qasim Fadal bin Muqtadir and entitled him Moti lillah, put him on the throne, performed the custom of the oath and fixed one hundred dinars per day as his salary. Moti lillah was born of a slave girl Mashghalah. He acceded to the throne in Jumad Thani 334 A.H.

Muizzuddaulah appointed Abu Muhammad Hasan bin Muhammad Muhallabi minister to the caliph. The minister was in fact the real minister of the country but the caliph was only a figurehead. It has been stated above that Nasiruddaulah and Saifuddaulah bin Hamdan had captured Mousil and Syria respectively while Egypt was ruled over by Akhsheed Muhammad bin Tafaj Farghani.

When Nasiruddaulah came to know that Muizzuddaulah controlled Baghdad, he left Mousil with an army and arrived at Samrah in 334 A.H. Hearing this news Muizzuddaulah along with Moti lillah went out of Baghdad to face him. Muizzuddaulah suffered defeat and returned to Baghdad.

Muizzuddaulah along with Moti lillah reached the western part of Baghdad while Nasiruddaulah camped in the eastern part. Fighting began but ended in reconciliation between them. Muizzuddaulah had his grand daughter married to Nasiruddaulah's son Abu Qasim Buraidi. He revolted against Muizzuddaulah in Basra and in 336 A.H., Muizzuddaulah along with caliph Moti lillah invaded Basra. Abu Qasim was defeated and he fled to Qaramata in Bahrain and Muizzuddaulah captured Basra. Leaving Abu Jafar Sahiri in Basra, Muizzuddaulah along with caliph Moti lillah returned to Baghdad. In 337 A.H., Muizzuddaulah invaded the governor of Mousil, Nasiruddaulah bin Hamdan. Nasiruddaulah could not stand the pressure and he went to Nasiban. In the meantime, Muizzuddaulah's brother Ruknuddaulah sent news that the Khorasani army had attacked Jurjan and Rayy and he should send an army quickly. Muizzuddaulah reconciled with Nasiruddaulah again, left Mousil for Baghdad and Nasiruddaulah returned to Mousil.

This peace with Nasiruddaulah was made, on the condition that he would continue to pay the tax regularly and mention the names of the three brothers in the Friday sermon. In 338 A.H., Muizzuddaulah had this order written by caliph Moti lillah, "Ali bin Buwayh popularly known as Imaduddaulah should work with his brother Muizzuddaulah as his deputy and fulfill the royal commitment. However, Imaduddaulah died that year and Ruknuddaulah succeeded his brother as Muizzuddaulah's deputy. In 339 A.H., The black stone was restored to its original place in the Ka'bah with a gold frame around it.

In 341 A.H., a new group appeared which believed in transmigration. A man claimed that Ali's (ﷺ) soul had entered his body while his wife claimed that Fatima's (رضي الله عنها) soul had entered her body. Another said that Jibrail's (Gabriel) soul resided in his body. Hearing their claims the people beat them up. However, Muizzuddaulah being a

Shia ordered them to stop. He ordered them to respect them because he said they were from the Prophet's family. In 346 A.H., a great earthquake took place in Rayy and its neighborhood killing everyone except thirty people. 150 villages around Rayy sank into the earth and major parts of Halwan sunk into the water. In 347 A.H., another quake of the same intensity occurred. The same year Muizzuddaulah launched an offensive against Mousil because Nasiruddaulah delayed in paying the taxes. He conquered Mousil in Jumad Awwal 347 A.H.

Nasiruddaulah went to Nasiban. Leaving his assistant Subuktageen, in Mousil Muizzuddaulah went to Nasiban. Nasiruddaulah left Nasiban and went to his brother Saifuddaulah in Aleppo. Saifuddaulah entered into correspondence with Muizzuddaulah and made peace with him and a treaty was drawn up in Muharram 348 A.H. and Muizzuddaulah returned to Iraq. In 350 A.H., he had a very large palace constructed for himself in Baghdad the foundation of which was laid 36 yards deep. The same year the Romans captured Crete from the Muslims, which had been under their control since 230 A.H.

In the beginning of 352 A.H., Muizzuddaulah ordered that on 10 Muharram all shops must be closed to mourn the martyrdom of Imam Husain (ؑ), buying and selling should be suspended, the rural and urban people should wear mourning attire and lament in public. Women came out into the streets and markets with their hair undone, faces blackened, clothes torn, reciting eulogies and beating their breasts. The Shiites obeyed this order willingly but the Sunni Muslims were stunned into silence. The next year the same order was issued and the Sunnis were also ordered to carry it out. They could not tolerate this and a riot between the Shiites and the Sunnis erupted. This public mourning has become a tradition among the Shiites until today.

### **Capture of Oman and Death of Muizzuddaulah**

Oman was under Qaramata's control. In 355 A.H. Muizzuddaulah invaded Oman and captured it on 9 Dhul Hijjah 355 A.H. and expelled Qaramata from there. Thousands of Qaramata's followers

were killed and 89 of their boats were burned and sunk. Freeing himself from the campaign in Oman, he went to Wasit. He became ill and went to Baghdad. He was treated in the best possible way but he did not recover. After ruling for 22 years, he died in Rabia Thani 356 A.H.

### **Izzuddaulah's Rule**

At the time of his death, Muizzuddaulah had made his son Bakhtiyar his heir. He was given the title Izzuddaulah from the caliph and began to rule after Muizzuddaulah. The Delamis had become so powerful that they were regarded as the real rulers reducing the caliph to a non-entity. They started selecting their heirs to the throne on their own accord. The caliph chose his successor and the real rulers chose their successors. Muizzuddaulah was the first king of the Buwayhs and Izzuddaulah became the second king.

Izzuddaulah appointed Abul Fadal Abbas bin Husain Shirazi as his minister. The same year Jati bin Muizzuddaulah revolted against his brother Izzuddaulah in Basra. Abul Fadal Abbas went to confront him and brought him to Izzuddaulah as a captive who imprisoned him. In 362 A.H., Izzuddaulah removed Abul Fadal Abbas from the post of minister and replaced him with Muhammad bin Baqiah.

Muhammad bin Baqiah was an ordinary man. He was the superintendent of Izzuddaulah's household. In the same year, Abu Taghlab bin Nasiruddaulah bin Hamdan imprisoned his father and took his place as the ruler. Abu Taghlab was married to Izzuddaulah's daughter as mentioned above. His two brothers Ibrahim and Hamdan fled from Mosul and went to Izzuddaulah in Baghdad. They complained to him about Abu Taghlab and begged for help. Taking his minister Muhammad bin Baqiah and the commander Subuktageen with him Izzuddaulah invaded Mosul. Abu Taghlab closed down his office and went to Minjar.

Izzuddaulah entered Mosul while Abu Taghlab left Minjar and went to Baghdad. Izzuddaulah then sent Ibn Baqiah and Subuktageen to Baghdad to save it while he stayed in Mosul. Ibn Baqiah arrived in Baghdad before Abu Taghlab and Subuktageen they wanted to engage him in a battle outside of Baghdad.

The confrontation between Abu Taghlab and Subuktageen commenced while in Baghdad a riot broke out between the Shias and Sunnis. Hearing this Subuktageen and Abu Taghlab reconciled and decided to unseat all the Shias and enthrone a new caliph but then decide to suspend the idea. They called Ibn Baqiah from Baghdad and made terms for a peace settlement with Abu Taghlab. According to the terms of the peace pact Ibn Baqiah wrote to Izzuddaulah to leave Mosul and go to Baghdad and hand over the rule of Mosul to Abu Taghlab.

Abu Taghlab reached Mosul and embraced his father-in-law, Izzuddaulah. Izzuddaulah then went to Baghdad and on the way he went to Ahwaz to collect money. A riot erupted between the Turks and the Dailanis who were with Izzuddaulah and he punished the Turks. Hearing this Subuktageen, who was in Baghdad, rebelled, looted his house, arrested his relatives and sent them to Wasit. This occurred in Thul Qadah 363 A.H.

Subuktageen controlled Baghdad and he established a Sunni government. He expelled all the Shias from Baghdad and then forced the caliph to abdicate because his paralyses had rendered him unfit for the job. In Thul Qadah 363 A.H., caliph Moti lillah renounced the throne and his son Abdul Kareem with the title Taai lillah succeeded him. Caliph Moti lillah ruled for 26 years and a half as a figured head only. Nasiruddaulah bin Hamdan had been defending against the Romans and invading them since he captured Mosul. When Nasiruddaulah's brother Saifuddaulah bin Hamdan captured Halab and Homs, offence and defense against the Romans were his responsibilities. He very actively and successfully retaliated and defended these territories against Roman invasions. In 363 A.H., Izzuddaulah expunged the caliph's name from the Friday sermon. The caliph expressed his sense of grief and disappointment then Izzuddaulah stopped his salary. The caliph then had to sell his belongings to make both ends meet. After his deposition, Moti lillah title became Sheikh At-Fadil. He died in Muharram 362 A.H. in Wasit. Abu Bakr Shibli and Abu Nasr Farabi, Mutanabbi the poet, died during this administration.

### **Taai lillahh**

Abu Bakr Abdul Kareem Taai lillahh bin Moti lillah was born of a slave girl named Hazar. He acceded to the throne of the caliphate at the age of 45 on 23 Thul Qadah 363 A.H. following Moti's abdication. He conferred on Subuktageen the title of Nasiruddaulah and gave him a flag and appointed him Deputy of the Ruler replacing Izzuddaulah. The same year the Friday sermon in Madinah was read in the name of the ruler Muizz Obeidi. It has been stated above that when caliph Moti abdicated the caliphate Baghdad was ruled over by Subuktageen and Izzuddaulah bin Muizzuddaulah was in Ahwaz. Subuktageen sent Izzuddaulah's mother and brothers to Wasit. Hearing this news, Izzuddaulah went to Wasit to see his mother and wrote to his uncle Hasan bin Buwayh known as Ruknuddaulah the ruler of Iran, to send him reinforcements against Subuktageen and the Turks.

Ruknuddaulah gave an army to his minister Abul Fatah bin Hameed and sent him to his son Azduddaulah in Ahwaz. He wrote to his son to come with his army, join Abul Fatah and help his cousin Izzuddaulah.

Subuktageen took caliph Taai lillahh and his father Moti with him and marched to Wasit with an army of Turks. The ruler of Mosul, Abu Taghlab, heard about this and left Mosul and captured Baghdad. When Subuktageen and Moti reached near Wasit, coincidentally they both died. The Turks chose Uftageen as their leader and besieged Wasit. Uftageen was Muizzuddaulah's liberated Turk slave. Uftageen continued the siege for 50 days.

Azduddaulah with his father's minister Abul Fatah arrived in Wasit. Hearing of their arrival, Uftageen lifted the siege and went to Baghdad. Abu Taghlab left Baghdad upon receiving this news and went to Mosul. Izzuddaulah and Azduddaulah both stayed in Wasit for a few days. Then both cousins laid siege to Baghdad and stopped the food supply to the city, which caused great hardships to the civilians. The Turks looted Uftageen's house and then began to fight among themselves. At last, taking caliph Taai lillahh with him Uftageen broke the siege and escaped taking refuge in Takret.

Azduddaulah and Izzuddaulah entered Baghdad in Jumad Awwal 364 A.H. Azduddaulah corresponded with the Turks and had caliph Taai lillahh returned to Baghdad. He lodged him at the caliph's palace, took the oath as a formality for him, arrested Izzuddaulah and began to govern. Azduddaulah sent Muhammad bin Baqiah to Wasit as the ruler. Izzuddaulah's son Zaban, ruled over Basra. He wrote to Ruknuddaulah complaining against Azduddaulah citing Izzuddaulah's arrest and imprisonment. Ruknuddaulah was extremely aggrieved to hear this. He wrote a threatening letter to Azduddaulah. In reply, Azduddaulah wrote to his father Ruknuddaulah:

Izzuddaulah had no capability to govern. Had I not intervened, Bani Buwayh would have lost control over Baghdad. I promise to pay 30,000,000 dirhams annually to the province of Iraq. If you are interested in taking control over Iraq, you are welcome. I shall go to Iran.

It is quite evident from the letter that the Provinces of Iraq and Baghdad were under the jurisdiction of the Dailamis rulers and the strongest ruler at the time was Ruknuddaulah who lived in Khorasan. The caliph of Baghdad lived under the chief governor of Baghdad like a captive.

Finally, at Ruknuddaulah's insistence Azduddaulah released Izzuddaulah from captivity and handed over to him the government of Iraq and took a promise that the Friday sermon in Iraq would be read in the name of Azduddaulah and Izzuddaulah would regard himself as the deputy of Azduddaulah. He left Abul Fatah with Izzddaulah and went to Iran. After these events, Uftageen went to Damascus, expelled Muizz Obeidi's governor and captured it. The civilians of Damascus were pleased with his governance because Muizz Obeidi's ruler used to impose their beliefs on others by force and would harass them. With the coming of Uftageen, their ordeal ended. He introduced the Friday sermon in the name of caliph Taai instead of the Obeidi sultan. This happened in Shaban 364 A.H.

### **Azduddaulah's Government**

Ruknuddaulah died in 366 A.H. His son Azduddaulah succeeded him. Izzuddaulah planned to raise an army against Azduddaulah. Azduddaulah found this out and launched an offensive against Iraq. He captured Baghdad and Basra in 366 A.H. In the beginning of 367

A.H., Azduddaulah caught his father's minister Abul Fatah bin Ameer who had become a supporter of Izzuddaulah blinded him and put him into prison.

Izzuddaulah then blinded his minister Amad who had joined Azduddaulah secretly then he went towards Mosul and Syria. There he won Abu Taghlab's sympathy and invaded Baghdad. Azduddaulah arrested and killed Izzuddaulah in the fight, pursued Abu Taghlab and captured Mosul and Jazirah. Abu Taghlab had no more allies and went to the Roman emperor who had his daughter married to Abu Taghlab.

The government of Banu Hamdan was interrupted for a short time. Azduddaulah ruled for five and a half years and died in 372 A.H. The noblemen of the government put his son Kakjar on the throne and gave him the title Samsamuddaulah. Caliph Taai lillahh paid a visit to Samsamuddaulah to console and congratulate him.

### **Samsamuddaulah's Government**

Samsamuddaulah had several brothers. One of them was Sharfuddaulah who rebelled against him and captured Iran. In 375 A.H., he invaded Baghdad. In Ramadan 376 A.H., he arrested Samsamuddaulah and gained control over Baghdad. Caliph Taai lillahh congratulated Sharfuddaulah. Samsamuddaulah was sent to Iran where he was set free.

### **Sharfuddaulah's Government**

When Sharfuddaulah took control over Baghdad and Iraq, there were riots and killings in Mosul. After Sharfuddaulah his son Saduddaulah from Banu Hamdan ruled over Halab. Sharfuddaulah bin Azduddaulah ruled for 2 years and 8 months and died of dropsy in 379 A.H. His brother Bahauddaulah succeeded him as the ruler.

### **Bahauddaulah's Government**

Caliph Taai lillahh personally called on Bahauddaulah and gave him royal robes and congratulated him in keeping with tradition. Bahauddaulah deputed Nasiruddaulah bin Hamdan's sons Ibrahim



and Husain to govern Mosul and sent them to the governor there with his authorization. Later on, he regretted this and wrote to Mosul to the former governor that the authority should not be handed over to them. However, Ibrahim and Husain had already captured Mosul by force. In 380 A.H., Bahauddaulah called his nephew Abu Ali bin Sharfuddaulah who ruled over Iran, and had him assassinated. Then he left for Iran and seized the treasury capturing Iran. In the meantime, Samsamuddaulah, who had been in exile there, won the people to his side and began to conquer the territory. Finally, Bahauddaulah had to compromise with Samsamuddaulah on the condition that Iran be left under Samsamuddaulah's control. After this arrangement Bahauddaulah went to Baghdad where he found the Shias and the Sunnis at war.

Bahauddaulah made peace between them. In Ramadan, Caliph Taai lillahh held an open court. Bahauddaulah was sitting on a chair near the throne. The noblemen and the members of the government arrived at the court and took their seats after kissing the Caliph's hands. Meanwhile, a Dailamis chief entered and moved toward the Caliph to kiss his hand. The caliph stretched out his hand and the Dailamis caught hold of it, dragged and pulled him down and tied him up. The Dailamis began to loot the caliph's court and palace. Bahauddaulah left and went home. The Dailamis followed him dragging and humiliating the caliph on the way. Bahauddaulah then forced him to announce his abdication and Abul Abbas Ahmad bin Ishaq bin Moqtadir was enthroned with the title Qadir Billah. Taai lillahh was imprisoned and placed under house arrest in a part of the caliph's palace. Taai lillahh lived in this state until his death in 392 A.H.

### **Qadir Billah**

Abul Abbas Ahmad Qadir Billah Ishaq bin Moqtadir was born of a slave girl named Tamanna. He became Caliph on 12 Ramadan 381 A.H. He was an honest politician. He never missed getting up in the middle of the night to pray. He was a legal scholar. A few days after his accession to the throne, both Bahauddaulah and Qadir Billah swore to remain loyal to each other. Qadir Billah tried to reduce the humiliation, which the caliph of Baghdad had to endure during Taai lillahh's administration. He tried to raise the status of the caliphate but

the Dailamis had gained too much power and the status of the caliphate had gone down so much that Qadir Billah could not bring about any major change. However, he improved his status in comparison to Taai lillahh.

As mentioned above, Samsamuddaulah and Bahauddaulah agreed to make peace with each other in 380 A.H. on the condition that both of them should continue to rule over Iran and Iraq respectively. Bahauddaulah violated the agreement and sent his army to invade Iran in 383 A.H. in order to expel Samsamuddaulah's governors and bring it under his control.

Samsamddaulah put his army to rout. In 384 A.H., Bahauddaulah sent a powerful army to Iran under Taghan Turki.

The battles between them continued until 380 A.H. with varied success. Finally, at the end of Thul Hijjah 388 A.H. Samsamuddaulah, after reigning for 9 years in Iran, was caught and killed and Iran came under the control of Bahauddaulah.

In 389 A.H., Bahauddaulah went to Iran in person and left Iraq under the control of Abu Jafar Hajjaj bin Hurmuz in Baghdad. Caliph Qadir Billah bestowed on Abu Jafar the title Ameeduddaulah. In 389 A.H., the territory of Mawaraunnahr went out of the control of Samania dynasty and that dynasty came to an end.

In 384 A.H., Khorasan had gone out Samani control. Half of its government was seized and captured by Subuktageen and the other half went under the domination of the Turks. This will be dealt with in detail later in the narrative. After some time a riot broke out between the Sunnis and Shias in Baghdad. At this news, Bahauddaulah sacked Ameeduddaulah as the ruler of Iraq and handed over the rule to Abu Ali Hasan bin Hurmuz in 390 A.H. and gave him the title Ameedul Juyush. Ameedul Juyush quelled the riot between the Sunnis and the Shias and administered the country well. In 391 A.H., Bahauddaulah dismissed Ameedul Juyush and handed over the responsibility of Iraq and Baghdad to Abu Nasr bin Sabur. There erupted a riot between the two communities again but they were reconciled. In 370 A.H., Bahauddaulah died and his son began to rule. Caliph Qadir Billah conferred on him the title Sultanuddaulah.

## **The Government of Sultanuddaulah**

Sultanuddaulah who succeeded his father Bahauddaulah deputed his brother Abul Fawaris as the governor of Kerman. Many of the Dailamis advised Abul Fawaris to seize and capture his brother's territory. Upon their advice, he formed an army and invaded Shiraz.

After a fierce battle, Abul Fawaris was defeated. Sultanuddaulah followed him. Abul Fawaris returned to Kerman but he could not find refuge there as Sultanuddaulah pursued him. Abul Fawaris left Kerman and went to Sultan Mahmood Ghaznawi bin Subuktageen's court. Mahmood Ghaznawi consoled him. He gave him an army under the command of one of his commanders, Abu Sayeed Tai. Abul Fawaris with these reinforcements invaded Iran again. He was put to rout again. Having lost, he did not approach Sultan Mahmood Ghaznawi again because he had not treated Abu Sayeed Tai well. He went to the ruler of Batiha, Mohazzabuddaulah. He entered into correspondence with Sultanuddaulah and begged forgiveness and received a pardon and was assigned to Kerman again.

## **The Revolt of The Turks**

The tribes of Turks who lived in Khata staged a revolt, they took over a mountain pass between China and Mawaraunnahr and began looting, plundering and killings in the territory ruled over by Tagha Khan, the ruler of Turkistan. Tagha Khan raised an army of 120,000 from the Islamic territories. They fought and the Turks escaped he began to pursue them. He left the jurisdiction of his territory, the chase lasted 3 months and in the ensuing battle Tagha Khan killed two hundred thousand Turks before returning to Turkistan. The Turks, more commonly known as Mongols, were severely punished. This occurred in 408 A.H.

Sultanuddaulah appointed his brother Musharrafuddaulah as the governor of Iraq. Musharrafuddaulah stopped mentioning Sultanuddaulah's name being in the Friday sermon in Iraq and introduced his own name. He deposed Sultanuddaulah in 411 A.H.

## **The Government of Sharafuddaulah**

When all the Dailami chiefs in Iraq accorded recognition to Sharafuddaulah's government and leadership, Sultanuddaulah gave an army to his son Abu Kalijar. Abu Kalijar captured Ahwaz. After a few clashes it was decided in 412 A.H., that Sharafuddaulah should rule over Iraq while Iran should remain under Sultanuddaulah. In 414 A.H., Kufa had a riot between the Sunnis and the Shias. The news of the riot reached Baghdad and incited a riot there also. The Dailamis who were in power were all Shias. The caliph who was powerless was a Sunni. The population of Turks who lived in Baghdad and Samrah were all Sunnis and so they thought it obligatory to comply with the caliph's orders. Caliph Qadir Billah thought over the situation deeply and took bold steps in order to help the Sunnis and restrain the Shias. A good number of the Turks and other Sunnis of Baghdad supported caliph Qadir Billah and that was why he commanded some status and respect. Sharafuddaulah died in the fifth year of his rule in 416 A.H. His brother Abu Tahir Jalaluddaulah, the ruler of Basra, succeeded him.

## **The Government of Jalaluddaulah**

After Sharafuddaulah's death, the Friday sermon was read in the name of Jalaluddaulah in Baghdad. Jalaluddaulah left Basra but instead of going to Baghdad, he went to Wasit. When this occurred, the people of Baghdad expunged his name from the Friday sermon and inserted his nephew's name Abu Kalijar bin Sultanuddaulah's instead. Abu Kalijar was at war with his uncle Abul Fawaris in Kerman. The people of Baghdad requested Abu Kalijar to come to Baghdad but he could not get there then Jalaluddaulah left Wasit and went to Baghdad. The Baghdad army stopped his entry into the city and chased him away. He went to Basra again. When this occurred, the people of Baghdad became worried that Abu Kalijar would not be able to come to the city. The Khorasanis, the Turks and the Dailamis held a council. They feared that after Jalaluddaulah's retreat there was a good possibility of some Kurd or Arab leader coming to power. If an Arab came to power, the Turks and the Dailamis would not be able to conquer Baghdad and the Arab's control over Basra, Syria, Hijaz, Yamamah, Bahrain and Mosul would be strengthened by more Arab support.

In view of this, letters were sent to Jalaluddaulah inviting him to come to Baghdad without delay. He therefore came to Baghdad and began to rule and his name was incorporated into the Friday sermon.

In 418 A.H., Jalaluddaulah passed orders for a drum to be beaten five times a day at the time of prayer. Caliph Qaidr Billah disapproved of it, as there was no precedent for it and insisted to withdraw the order. He did withdraw the order but was displeased with the Caliph. After sometime, the Caliph rescinded his objection and Jalaluddaulah re-issued the order to beat the drum at the time of prayer.

In 419 A.H., the Turks revolted against Jalaluddaulah but Qadir Billah intervened and arranged a compromise between them. Then Abu Kalijar attacked Iraq and Jalaluddaulah dispatched the army to face him and a chain of battles began. The two sides continued fighting until Qadir Billah died in 432 A.H. After his death his son Abu Jafar Abdullah with the title Qayem bi Amrillah was enthroned. Sheikh Taqiuddin Salah has included Qadir Billah among the legal scholars of the Shafi school of thought.

### **Qayem Bi Amrillah**

Abu Jafar Abdullah Qayem Bi Amrillah bin Qadir Billah was born of an Armenian slave girl named Badrudduja on 15 Thul Qadah 391 A.H. He was a handsome, religious, pious and humble man. He was a literary figure, a calligrapher, generous, a giver of charity and helpful. Jalaluddaulah's administrative ability had suffered setbacks and that gave rise to the outbreak of rebellions in his army time after time. In 425 A.H., he settled in Mohalla Karkh and deputed Arsalan Turki known as Basasiri to the western part of Baghdad. Basasiri subjected the people of Baghdad to great harassment. He did not spare even the caliph. He treated him roughly and rendered him powerless and reduced him to the position of a prisoner.

Riots erupted between the Shias and the Sunnis. Since Basasiri was a supporter of the Shias, the Sunnis suffered great losses. The army revolted in 427 A.H. and encircled Jalaluddaulah's house and looted it. Jalaluddaulah went to Takrait. Caliph Bi Amrillah intervened and succeeded in bringing the Turks of the army and

Jalaluddaulah back together. In 428 A.H., Jalaluddaulah and his nephew Abu Kalijar reconciled and pledged to live in peace and amity with each other.

In 429 A.H., Jalaluddaulah requested caliph Bi Amrillah to bestow on him the title Malikul Mulook (King of Kings). The caliph consulted the scholars and legal experts about its justification. Some justified it but others declared it unlawful (Editor's note: This title is mentioned in Hadith as the worst of names). Finally, after being pressured by Jalaluddaulah he gave him the requested title. In 431 A.H., Abu Kalijar invaded Basra, expelled its ruler and captured it. He handed it over to his son Izzul Molook and he went to Ahwaz. The same year Tughral Baig Saljuk defeated Sultan Masood bin Mahmood bin Subuktageen's commander and captured Nishapur. He imposed himself on Khorasan and came to be known as Sultan Al-Azam.

The same year witnessed the signing of a peace treaty between Tughral Baig and Jalaluddaulah and the caliph sent his special messenger Qadi Abul Hasan to Tughral Baig. In Shaban 435 A.H., Jalaluddaulah died and the people chose his son Abul Mansoor Malikul Aziz as his successor. But Malikul Aziz could not pay the troops according to their expectations and that disheartened them. Taking advantage of this Abu Kalijar sent money to the army chiefs in Baghdad and his name began to be read in the Friday sermon. In Safar 436 A.H., he entered Baghdad and the caliph conferred on him the title Mohiuddin. In 439 A.H., Abu Kalijar entitled Mohiuddin bin Sultanuddaulah bin Bahauddaulah bin Azduddaulah bin Ruknuddaulah bin Buwayh Dailamis was reconciled with Sultan Tughral Baig by marrying his daughter to him.

### **Abu Kalijar's Government**

After assuming the post of second in command Abu Kalijar, by virtue of his planning, expediency, cleverness and military offensives conquered Isfahan and Kerman. He ruled for 4 years and three months and died in 440 A.H. His son Abu Nasr Firoz who chose Malikur Rahim as his title succeeded him.

## **Malikur Rahim's Government**

Malikur Rahim began his government in Baghdad and Iraq. Another brother of his Mansoor Khusroo captured Shiraz. The same year a great riot took place in Baghdad. The cause of the riot was the same old rivalry between the Shias and the Sunnis. Malikur Rahim invaded his brother Abu Mansoor Khusroo who had captured Shiraz. Several battles took place after which Malikur Rahim's other brother and some relatives revolted in Iraq. In 442 A.H., the Shias and the Sunnis clashed again in Baghdad leaving hundreds dead on both sides.

The same year Tughral Baig captured Isfahan and sent his brother Arsaian bin Dawood to Iran. He conquered Iran in 442 A.H. Caliph Qaim Bi-Amrillah sent the certificates of governorship of all those provinces, which he had brought under his control to Tughral Baig.

On the eve of Eid in 443 A.H., Sultan Tughral Baig went to Baghdad to pay his respects to the caliph. He was honored with royal robes and returned. In 445 A.H., Baghdad again witnessed a great riot between the Shias and the Sunnis. Several areas of Baghdad were burned alive. Caliph Bi-Amrillah controlled the riot with great difficulty. Malikur Rahim remained engaged in war with his brothers and nephews in Shiraz and Basra until 447 A.H.

During this period, Sultan Tughral Baig conquered Azerbaijan and Jazirah and declared holy war against the Romans. After capturing huge amounts of wealth from these expeditions, he completed the conquest of Khorasan and Iran and brought under his control Mosul and Syria. Then he went to Makkah to perform Hajj afterwards he concentrated on making the administration of Rayy and Khorasan more efficient. The worst kind of rulers had been having their sway in and around Baghdad. In 447 A.H., Tughral Baig sent a letter of obedience and homage to caliph Qaim Bi-Amrillah. The same period saw the return of Malikur Rahim from Basra to Baghdad. He advised the caliph to continue to live on good terms with Tughral Baig. The caliph ordered in Ramadan 447 A.H. that Sultan Tughral Baig's name be read in the Friday sermon. That pleased Sultan Tughral Baig and he sought the caliph's permission to appear before him. The caliph granted his request and the leaders of the Baghdad army sent letters

of their loyalty to the Sultan. On 25 Ramadan 447 A.H., a large reception was arranged for the Sultan in Baghdad.

Basasiri, who was a Shia and had conspired with the Obeidi governor of Egypt, planned a riot in Baghdad. Tughral Baig arrived in Baghdad and made careful administrative arrangements and broke the power of the Dailamis. In 448 A.H., Sultan Tughral Baig married his niece Khadijah known as Arsalan Khatoon bint Dawood to caliph Qaim Bi-Amrillah and in this way established a relationship with the caliph's family. In Shawwal 448 A.H., Sultan Tughral Baig's cousin Qatlimas clashed with Basasiri at Sanjar and defeated him.

Basasiri then captured the province of Mosul and had the name of the Egyptian ruler Mustansir Obeidi read in the Friday sermon. The ruler of the province of Jazirah also rebelled. Sultan Tughral invaded Mosul, conquered it and punished the rebels and returned to Baghdad in the beginning of 449 A.H. The caliph honored him very much. He held court and conferred on him the title of 'Malikul Mashriq-wal-Maghrib' and handed over to him the governments and administrations of all the territories and provinces.

During the intervening period, Basasiri and the ruler of Egypt Obeidi misguided Sultan Tughral Baig's brother Ibrahim and caused a rebellion in Hamadan. Sultan Tughral Baig left Baghdad to stamp out the rebellion there. Basasiri took advantage of his absence and captured Baghdad. He had Mustansir Obeidi's name read in the Friday sermon in the grand mosque of Baghdad on 8 Thul Qadah 450 A.H. The Shias of the city helped Basasiri in all possible ways. He used the altered Shia call to prayer in Baghdad according to their tradition. Tired of the oppression of Basasiri, the Sunnis revolted but lost and many were killed by the military. Basasiri caught the caliph's Prime Minister and executed him in Thul Hijjah 450 A.H. He sent the news to Mustansir Obeidi in Egypt and asked for reinforcements however, he did not get any help from Egypt.

Meanwhile Basasiri received news that Sultan Tughral Baig had been victorious over his brother Ibrahim. He arrested caliph Qaim Bi-Amrillah and his wife Arsalan Khatoon and put them under house arrest somewhere out side Baghdad and had the caliph's palace looted. Upon receiving this news, Tughral Baig returned to Baghdad.



Basasiri heard the news and after a year of ruling, left Baghdad on 6 Thul Qadah 451 A.H. Tughril entered Baghdad. He called the caliph, enthroned him and asked his forgiveness saying that it was due to his absence that he had suffered such tortures. Meanwhile Tughril Baig's brother Dawood died in Khorasan. Caliph Qaim Bi-Amrillah entered Baghdad on 25 Thul Qadah 451 A.H.

### **Summary of the Buwayhid Dynasty**

An account of the descendents of Buwayh Dailami, the fishermen, has already been given in previous pages. It was they, who dominated over the caliphate and completely ruined it. They dominated and ruled over the administration of Baghdad and Iraq as a whole and Iran for over a century. They were Shias and so the suffering the Sunnis had to under go during this period were too horrible to describe. Surprisingly, the Alawis did not get any benefit during this regime. Though the Buyid's claimed to be loved from the Prophet's family, they never tried to strengthen any Alawi nor did they bring any Alawis into power. Some of them were scholars and a few madrasas started during their regime but they were all affected by the Zoroastrian culture. They ended the Abbasid government and tried to establish a government of their own community and family.

During their regime all traces of Arab leadership were erased, their most notorious achievement was that they kept the Shias and the Sunnis at war with each other and introduced some irreligious rites to the Muslim community, which still exist until today. The jurisdiction of their government did not extend beyond Iran and Iraq. They never were able to rule over Mawaraunnahr and Khorasan. Syria and Hijaz also remained free from their abominations. Their 100-125 year long rule is replete with anarchy, looting, feuds and riots. The Buyid dynasty was not auspicious for the Muslims. They worked hard to put an end to the respect, dignity and grandeur of the Islamic government and did not leave behind anything the Muslims can be proud of today. This dynasty saw its end in 447 A.H. and it was replaced by the Seljuq dynasty during the caliphate of Qaim Bi-Amrillah.

## **Beginning of the Seljuq Dynasty**

The Seljuq dynasty will not be recorded in connection with the Abbasid caliphs as the Buyid dynasty has been recorded above. It will find space in a separate chapter. However, it is necessary at this point to show how the Seljuq dynasty began. The Sasanid and Ghaznavid dynasties will be covered later in the narrative.

The territory of the Turks extended from the Chinese border to Khwarzám, Shash, Farghana, Bukhara, Samarkand and Tirmiz. The Muslims defeated them and made them pay taxes. Some of their tribes remained in the hard to reach mountain passes near the Chinese border they lived free from paying loyalty to the Muslims and were unconnected to China and Turkistan. In 400 A.H., they began to come out of those passes and raid the territories of Mawaraunnahr, which had been under the occupation of Turk chiefs after the fall of the Samani dynasty.

Islam had spread in those areas. Their greatest chief Elak Khan ruled there. Their greed for looting and killing goaded these Turks, who were unconcerned with and strangers to Islam to invade Turkistan and Mawaraunnahr. By 418 A.H., these Turks left their mountain passes and their forces reached to Azerbaijan. The general chaos and weakness of the Islamic caliphate enabled them to reach these distant places and loot the populated areas.

In 418 A.H., a noble and respectable Turkish tribe, which had remained aloof of these events, concentrated in Turkistan. These tribesmen camped on a main route in a pasture at a distance of 20 miles from Bukhara. The chief of that tribe was known as Seljuq. This tribe was more cultured and noble hearted than the other Turk predecessors. They were nomadic and their herds were with them. Their numbers were staggering. They were physically very strong and brave. Mahmood Ghaznawi's governor of Tus informed him of the arrival of the new tribe and told him that their presence near Bukhara was a danger. Sultan Mahmood Ghaznawi went to Bukhara and sent a message to these Turks to send their representative to his court. Arsalan bin Seljuq or Israil bin Seljuq came to the court of Mahmood representing his tribe.

Mahmood Ghaznawi took him hostage in breach of his promise and sent him as prisoner to the Indian fort of Kalinjer. Mahmood Ghaznawi died after two or three years and Arsalan's tribe found it easier to capture the plains of Khorasan than Turkistan and they settled throughout Khorasan. The rebel tribes that had been engaged in killing and plundering joined them. Mahmood Ghaznawi's son Mas'ud Ghaznawi tried to intercept and stop them and waged several wars with them. But ultimately they expelled the Ghaznawis from Khorasan and captured it. Mahmood Ghaznawi's descendents began to grow weaker and weaker. They made peace with the Seljuqs and left Khorasan to them. Buwayh's, descendents were engaged in civil wars and had no power to face the Seljuqs and the Seljuqs made major advances. As the Abbasid caliph was in Baghdad so the Seljuqs held him in no special esteem.

The Seljuq tribe had embraced Islam on the plains of Bukhara prior to their series of conquests. They were unconnected to the Shias because the Muslims in Mawaraunnahr and Bukhara were Sunnis, which the Seljuqs had adopted. Those who were sick of the Buyid's oppression regarded the Seljuqs as saviors. The chief of the Seljuqs, Tughral Baig, first conquered Khorasan, Azerbaijan and Jazirah. His power increased and then, as mentioned earlier, went to Baghdad. He dislodged the Dailamis from power and was given the title Deputy of the Ruler. His descendents ruled for a long period and his successor Alp Arsalan Seljuqi founded a powerful government that extended from the Danube River to the Sindh River in present day Pakistan. We will now relate the remaining events of caliph Qaim Bi-Amrillah's life.

In 415 A.H., Sultan Tughral Baig's brother Chughri Baig Dawood the ruler of Khorasan, made a treaty with the Ghaznawi Sultan. The same year Abul Fadl Behaqi, Sultan Masood Ghaznawi's religious advisor, wrote his book of history during sultan Ibrahim Ghaznawi's regime. After Chughri Baig Dawood's death sultan Tughral Baig married his brother wife, Sulaiman's mother. The same year he attacked, captured and killed Basasiri while he was in the process of killing and plundering in Kufa. He cut off his head and sent it to Baghdad where it was hung on the gate of caliph's castle.

In Muharram 452 A.H., Sultan Tughral Baig became free from the

administration of Baghdad and went to Wasit from there he then went to the province of Jabal and Azerbaijan. On 15 Rabia Awwal 453 A.H., Abul Fatah bin Ahmad left Ahwaz and went to Baghdad and the caliph made him his minister. Shortly after that, Abu Nasr bin Jahir bin Marwan was given the title "Fakhruddaulah" and made minister. Abul Fatah was dismissed and returned to Ahwaz.

After his wife's death in 453 A.H., Sultan Tughral Baig sent a message to the caliph through Abu Sad, the Judge of Rayy that he would like to marry his daughter Sayyidah. The caliph refused them. Tughral Baig sent his minister Aameedul Malik Kundri. Aameedul Malik stayed in Baghdad until Jumad Thani 454 A.H. and tried to convince the caliph to agree to the proposal but in vain and he returned to Tughral Baig. Tughral Baig then sent threatening letters to the Chief Justice of Baghdad and Sheikh, Abu Mansoor bin Yusuf. They went to the caliph's court and pleaded with him to give his daughter in marriage to him. When the caliph saw that the affair might become prolonged, he decided it was better to agree to the wedding. Besides, his wife Arsalan Khatoon who was Tughral Baig's niece also pleaded the case with him. He appointed Tughral Baig's minister Aameedul Malik to assume the legal responsibility for Princess Sayyidah's marriage and to sign the marriage contract on his behalf. In Shaban 454 A.H., the marriage contract of the caliph's daughter to Tughral Baig was signed at the camp of Tabrez.

After the marriage contract was signed, Tughral Baig sent valuables, gold and jewels as gifts to the caliph and his daughter and transferred all the property of his deceased wife to Sayyidah, the daughter of the caliph Qaim Bi-Amrillah. Then in Muharram 455 A.H., he left Armenia for Baghdad and the Princess's wedding feast was held. He remained in Baghdad until Rabia Awwal and then left along with his wife Sayyidah Khatoon for the province of Jabal. When he reached Rayy, he fell ill and died on 8 Ramadan 455 A.H.

Tughral Baig had no children. Sulaiman bin Dawood Chughri Baig was Tughral's nephew and stepson. Aameedul Malik enthroned him but the people opposed him and read the name of Sulaiman's brother Alp Arsalan bin Dawood Chughri Baig in the Friday sermon. He was the ruler of Khorasan and lived in Merv. Hearing of the enthronement

of his brother, Alp Arsalan left Merv and invaded Rayy. Ameerul Malik presented himself to him as his loyal subject and took the oath for him. But Alp Arsalan remained doubtful about him and in 456 A.H. he imprisoned Ameerul Malik and made his own minister, Nizamul Mulk Toosi, the Prime Minister. Having entered Rayy, Alp Arsalan returned the caliph's daughter Sayyidah to Baghdad with great honor. The Friday sermon in Baghdad was read in the name of Sultan Alp Arsalan.

Nizamul Mulk Toosi, on behalf of Sultan Alp Arsalan, visited Baghdad on 7 Jumad Awwal 456 A.H. to take the oath of allegiance for the caliph. The caliph held an open court and conferred on Sultan Alp Arsalan the title of 'Al-waladul Mu'ayyad'. In 460 A.H., the caliph dismissed Fakhruddaulah bin Jahir from the ministry but restored it to him in Safar 461 A.H. In 462 A.H., the ruler of Makkah, Muhammad bin Abi Hashim expunged the Obeidi ruler's name from the Friday sermon and put caliph Qaim bi-Amrillah and Sultan Alp Arsalan's names in it and deleted the Shiite addition to the call to prayer, and sent his son with a delegation to Sultan Arsalan. The Sultan was highly pleased and gave him royal robes, 30 thousand dinars as a reward and fixed 10 thousand dinars per annum as his salary.

In 462 A.H., the Roman emperor Armanoos invaded the Province of Khalat with an army of 200,000. The emperor was accompanied and joined by the Kings of France and Russia. Sultan Alp Arsalan defeated them with only 15 thousand men. He caught the Russian King and chopped off his ears and nose. He arrested Armanoos and released him after taking a commitment of allegiance and loyalty from him. After dealing this crushing defeat to the large Roman army, the Sultan went to Mawaraunnahr in 465 A.H. A bridge over the Jejune River was built and within 20 days, the royal army was able to cross the river. The commander in charge of an opposing fort named Yusuf Khwarzmi was ushered into the caliph's court for sentencing. The sultan said: "Release him. I shall shoot him with my arrow." By chance, the arrow missed the target. Yusuf ran to the Sultan and wounded him with his dagger. Those present at the court killed Yusuf but the Sultan succumbed to the injury on 10 Rabia Awwal 465 A.H. His dead body was brought to Merv and buried there. His son Malik

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Shah succeeded him. Caliph Qaim Bi-Amrillah sent all the official agreements and treaties and other official documents to Malik Shah. On 15 Shaban 467 A.H., the caliph had his doctor let blood and then he went to sleep. Unfortunately, the punctured vein opened and bled profusely. The members of the government were called in and they took the oath for the dying caliph's grandson Abul Qasim Abdullah bin Zakhiratuddin Muhammad bin Qaim Bi-Amrillah. The caliph died the next day. He had only one son whose name was Zakhiratuddin Muhammad. He had died during this father's lifetime. Six months after his death his son Abul Qasim Abdullah was born. Abul Qasim came to the throne and adopted the title of 'Muqtadi Bi-Amrillah'. Caliph Qaim Bi-Amrillah had sat on the throne for 45 years.

### **Muqtadi Bi Amrillah**

Abul Qasim Abdullah Muqtadi Bi Amrillah bin Muhammad bin Qaim Bi Amrillah was born to a slave-girl named Arghawan. He was enthroned at the age of 19 years and 3 months. As soon as he assumed the throne, he issued orders for playing, singing and using musical instruments to be immediately banned. During his regime the respect and power of the caliphate was elevated. He was very pious, religious minded and courageous. He came into power in Shaban 467 A.H. A chief of Sultan Malik Shah, Atsaz bin Auf Khwarzmi conquered Damascus in Thul Qadah 468 A.H. and had the names of caliph Muqtadi and Sultan Malik Shah read in the Friday sermon. The words the Shiites had added to the call to the prayer were removed. By degrees, he occupied the whole of Syria. In 469 A.H., a riot erupted between religious sects leaving many dead and injured on both sides. In 470 A.H., Malik Shah gave Syria to his brother Tajuddaulah Tatash as a feudal estate and permitted him to capture as much territory from the Egyptian ruler as possible.

In 471 A.H., Tajuddaulah Tatash besieged Aleppo (Halab) meanwhile the Egyptian army encircled Damascus. Atsaz was besieged and asked Tatash for help. He lifted the siege of Aleppo and went to Damascus. The Egyptians escaped at the approach of Tatash. Tajuddaulah Tatash killed Atsaz for his negligence. In 476 A.H., caliph Muqtadi dismissed Amiduddaulah bin Fakhruddaulah bin Jahir from

the ministry and appointed Abu Shuja Muhammad bin Hasan to this post. Malik Shah called Amiduddaulah to him and gave him the governorship of the Provinces of Bakr.

In Shaban 477 A.H., Sulaiman bin Qatalmash Saljuqi, the ruler of Konya, snatched Antakiah from the Romans. Antakiah had been under the possession of the Roman since 358 A.H. In 479 A.H., Yusuf bin Tashfeen, the ruler of Morocco, requested caliph Muqtadi to give him the certificate of the governorship of all the territories under him and to confer on him the title of Sultan. The caliph obliged him and sent him royal robes and the flag and gave him the title of Amirul Muslimeen. This was the same Yusuf bin Tashfeen who founded the city of Marrakech. In Thul Hijjah 479 A.H., Sultan Malik Shah entered Baghdad for the first time. He went to the caliph and received a royal robe and the next day he played polo with the caliph.

Minister Nizamul Mulk inspected the schools he established. Having lived in Baghdad for a number of months Sultan Malik Shah left for Isfahan. In 481 A.H., Ibrahim bin Masood bin Mahmood bin Subuktageen died and was succeeded by Jalaluddin Masood. In 484 A.H., the Normans captured the island of Sicily. The island was first conquered by the Muslims in 200 A.H. and ruled over by Banu Aghlab followed by the Obeidis. Sicily was taken from the Obeidis (Fatimids) by the Normans. The same year in Ramadan 484 A.H. Sultan Malik Shah arrived in Baghdad again.

In 485 A.H., a Qaramoti killed minister Nizamul Mulk Toosi at the age of 73 in Nihawand.

On 15 Shawwal, of the same year, Malik Shah died and a battle between his wife Turkan Khatoon and his son Barkiaraq began. In 486 A.H., Barkiaraq became free from the battles and visited Baghdad. Caliph Muqtadi gave him the title of 'Ruknuddaulah' and honored him with royal robes of honor and authority. It is said that Malik Shah's death was caused by Caliph Muqtadi's curse. Malik Shah had told the caliph to leave Baghdad and go to any place of his choice so that he could turn Baghdad into his own capital exclusively. The caliph was given 8 days time and began cursing Malik Shah. By the 8<sup>th</sup> day, Malik Shah died and the caliph escaped the ordeal.



Suddenly caliph Muqtadi died on 5 Muharram 487 A.H. It is said that an adviser of his named Shamsunnahar poisoned him. After his death, his son Abul Abbas Ahmad came to the throne and took the title of 'Mustazhir Billah'.

### **Mustazhar Billah**

Abul Abbas Ahmed Mustazhir Billah bin Muqtadi Billah was born in Shawwal 470 A.H. and succeeded to the throne following his father's death. Barkiaraq was present in Baghdad at the time. He willingly took the oath for him.

On the third day after caliph Muqtadi's death a meeting was held to mourn his death and Sultan Barkiaraq along with his minister Izzul Mulk bin Nizamul Mulk and his brother Bahaul Mulk paid a visit to the caliph's court. Other members of the government also visited for the same purpose. In 487 A.H., Mustansir Obeidi, the ruler of Egypt, died and his son Mustali came to the throne. In 488 A.H., the ruler of Samargand, Ahmad Khan, was arrested and killed for his irreligious activities. His cousin succeeded him.

The same year both Tatash and Barkiaraq clashed and Barkiaraq killed Tatash. This stabilized Barkiaraq's government. His brother Muhammad grew more powerful. Barkiaraq fought with him at Rayy in 492 A.H. but lost and went to Khuzistan. Muhammad bin Malik Shah entered Baghdad and received the title of 'Gheyathuddunayawaddin' from caliph Mustazhir Billah on 15 Thul Hijjah 492 A.H. Then he left for Khorasan. Barkiaraq left Khuzistan and went to Wasit and collected an army and entered Baghdad on 15 Safar 493 A.H. The caliph congratulated him, gave him a royal robe and his name began to be read in the Friday sermon. He then attacked Muhammad bin Malik Shah. They fought at Hamadan near the White River, which resulted in the defeat of Barkiaraq. Then Sultan Muhammad's name was read again in the Friday sermon in Baghdad on 15 Rajab 493 A.H. Following his defeat Barkiaraq stayed at Rayy. He left for Isfahan and then moved to Khuzistan. He collected an army from there and again clashed with Muhammad on 1 Jumad Thani 494 A.H. After defeating him, he went to Rayy. Muhammad went to his brother Sanjar at Jurjan. Barkiaraq arrived in Baghdad on 15 Thul Qadah 494 A.H. His

name was read in the Friday sermon.

In short, Sultan Barkiaraq and his brother Sultan Muhammad fought a series of battles. Sometimes one ruled over Baghdad and sometimes the other. Sometimes they reconciled and then they would clash again. The incessant battles resulted in the loss of peace in Iraq, Iran, and Jazirah. People found it difficult to protect their lives and honor. In Jumadi Awwal 497 A.H., a treaty of peace was drafted by the joint efforts of the chiefs of the armies and the territories were divided between them. Besides, both of them agreed that the names of both should be read in the Friday sermons of their respective countries. According to that agreement, the government of Baghdad remained under Sultan Barkiaraq. After that, he stayed in Isfahan for a few days. He fell ill and died in Rabia Thani 494 A.H. at Yazdjurd while on the way to Baghdad. At the time of his death, he declared his son Malik Shah bin Barkiaraq to be his heir-apparent and Amir Ayaz his tutor.

Malik Shah was only 5 at the time. Barkiaraq was buried in Isfahan. Amir Ayaz along with Malik Shah entered Baghdad on 15 Rabia Thani 498 A.H. The caliph conferred on Malik Shah all the titles, which belonged to his grandfather Malik Shah bin Alp Arsalan and his name was read in the Friday sermon there. After that, Sultan Muhammad captured Mosul and marched to Baghdad. He entered the city in 501 A.H., killed Amir Ayaz and had his own name read in the Friday sermon. In 502 A.H., he had a palace constructed in Baghdad for himself. His government was fully established and stabilized in his ancestral territories and uprisings and riots became things of the past. In Shaban, he fell ill. The illness prolonged and ultimately he died in 511 A.H. His son Sultan Mahmood succeeded him to the throne.

The caliph accorded approval to his succession and gave him a royal robe and his name was read in the Friday sermon in all the mosques, this took place on 15 Muharram 512 A.H. Caliph Mustazhir Billah died on 15 Rabia Thani 512 A.H. after 24 years and 3 months of his caliphate. After his death, his son Abu Mansoor Fadal came to the throne and chose the title 'Mustarshid Billah' for himself.

### **Mustarshid Billah**

Mustarshid Billah bin Mustazhir Billah was born in Rabia Awwal 485 A.H. and came to the throne in 512 A.H. at the age of 27. Caliph Mustarshid's brother Amir Abul Hasan bin Mustazhir did not take the oath for him and left Baghdad to Wasit. He was captured after a year and the caliph excused him and allowed him to stay at the palace. In the second month after the succession Masood bin Sultan Muhammad Seljuqi, Sultan Mahmood's brother living in Mosul, revolted and also called Qasimuddaulah Zangi bin Aqsanfar, the ruler of Sanjar and Abul Hija, the ruler of Ardbil to his aid and set up in Iraq. Sultan Tughril bin Sultan Muhammad was the ruler of Zanjan since his father's regime. Sultan Mahmood attacked Tughril. Tughril fled from Zanjan and Sultan Mahmood looted it.

When Sultan Muhammad died and Sultan Mahmood came to the throne, Mahmood's uncle Sanjar was the ruler of Mawaraunnahr. Previously Sultan Sanjar's title was Nasiruddin. After Sultan Muhammad's death, Sultan Sanjar attacked Sultan Mahmood and the uncle and the nephew faced off at Sadah in Jumad Awwal 513 A.H. Sultan Sanjar was also accompanied by Amir Abul Fadal, the ruler of Sajistan, Khwarzim Shah Muhammad, the Amir of Anzdar, and Alauddaulah, the ruler of Yazd. The clash resulted in the defeat of Sultan Mahmood and the victory of Sultan Sanjar, who captured Hamadan. When the news reached Baghdad, the Friday sermon was read in the name of Sultan Sanjar.

Following his defeat Sultan Mahmood took refuge in Isfahan. Finally, Sultan Sanjar's mother who was Sultan Mahmood's grandmother intervened and compelled them to compromise on the condition that Sultan Sanjar should consider Sultan Mahmood to be his heir-apparent and that Mahmood's name should follow Sanjar's in the Friday sermon. In keeping with the agreement, Sultan Sanjar sent declarations that Sultan Mahmood was heir to Mawaraunnahr, Ghaznah, and Khorasan. Sultan Sanjar took only Rayy from the control of Sultan Mahmood and he recognized him as the ruler of the other territories mentioned. On the other hand, Sultan Mahmood compromised with his brother Sultan Masood and gave him the

governorship of Mosul and Azerbaijan provinces. He made Mosul his capital.

In 514 A.H. Sultan Masood revolted against Sultan Mahmood and they clashed on 15 Rabia Awwal 514 A.H. Masood lost and took refuge in the mountains near Mosul. The noblemen of the area mediated and both the brothers compromised. Sultan Mahmood returned to Baghdad in Rajab 514 A.H. and Sultan Masood began to rule over Mosul again. In 515 A.H. Sultan Mahmood gave the rule of Mosul to Aqsanfar Barsaqi and left the province of Azerbaijan with Masood. Sultan Tughral has already been mentioned. He had gone to Ganjah after losing to Sultan Mahmood. In 516 A.H., a treaty of peace was drafted and agreed to by both Sultan Mahmood and Sultan Tughral. After that, Sultan Mahmood gave the territory of Wasit and Mosul as a feudal estate to Aqsanfar Barsaqi. Aqsanfar Barsaqi deputed Qasimuddaulah Emaduddin Zangi bin Aqsanfar to govern Wasit on his behalf. In 517 A.H., Sultan Mahmood killed his minister Shamsul Malik while caliph Mustarshid sacked Shamsul Malik's brother Nizamddaulah from his ministry. In Thul Hijjah 517 A.H., caliph Mutarshid formed an army and left for Baghdad to punish Dibas bin Sadqah. The armies of Mosul and Wasit also joined the caliph. The fight took place at Mubarkah. Emaduddin Zangi bin Aqsanfar, the ruler of Wasit, showed exemplar bravery leading to victory for the caliph. The caliph entered Baghdad victoriously on 10 Muharram 518 A.H. That was the first battle after many years that was waged under the command of an Abbasid caliph. Then the news came that Dibas bin Sadqah wanted to loot Basra. Emaduddin Zangi left to defend it and Dibas returned without success to Tughral bin Sultan Muhammad. The same year Aqsanbar was appointed defender of Iraq and had to defend Mosul from Roman attacks. He called Emaduddin Zangi from Basra to Mosul. He left Basra but did not go to Mosul. He went to Sultan Mahmood who was in Isfahan. Sultan Mahmood gave him the certificate of governorship of Basra and he returned there. When Dibas bin Sadqah went to Sultan Tughral, he included him among his companions.

Dibas instigated Tughral to invade Iraq. In 519 A.H., Tughral with Dibas camped at Waquqa. Upon receiving the news caliph Mustarshid left for Baghdad on 5 Safar 519 A.H. in order to face him. They fought

at Nahrwan. Both Dibas and Tughral went to Sultan Sanjar in Khorasan. In Rajab 520 A.H., Yartaqash Zakwi, the city Magistrate of Baghdad went to Sultan Mahmood in Isfahan and said, "Caliph Mustarshid has collected an army and a huge amount of arms and equipment. His financial condition is very sound and there is a danger that he might get out of our control." Sultan Mahmood prepared his army and marched to Baghdad. When caliph Mustarshid heard that Sultan Mahmood was coming to Baghdad he wrote to him. 'You need not come here. You should return to punish and discipline the headstrong like Dibas'. This convinced Sultan Mahmood that the caliph really wanted to be free of his subjugation and he began to move towards Baghdad faster. On 17 Thul Hijjah, he entered it and the caliph went to western part of Baghdad. On 1 Muharram 521 A.H., Sultan Mahmood's men looted the caliph's palace. 30 thousand inhabitants of Baghdad gathered round caliph Mustarshid to support him. A chain of battles began along the bank of the river Tigris. After many battles and trials of strength both compromised. In Rabia Thani 521 A.H. Sultan Mahmood left Baghdad for Hamadan. He called Emadudin Zangi from Basra to protect Baghdad. It has been mentioned above that both Dibas and Tughral had reached Sanjar in Khorasan. They convinced Sanjar to be against Caliph Mustarshid and Sultan Mahmood and Sanjar with his army marched to Rayy. After arriving there, he called Sultan Mahmood to him from Hamadan.

The plan was that if Sultan Mahmood was not an opponent he would come, otherwise he would refuse. He went to his uncle Sanjar without any hesitation. Sanjar treated him honorably and recommended Dibas to accompany Mahmood. Mahmood went to Hamadan with Dibas and entered Baghdad on 9 Muharram 522 A.H. He took Dibas to the caliph's court and recommended him to the Caliph. The caliph excused him. Sultan Mahmood deputed Bahroz to ensure the safety of Baghdad and sent Emaduddin Zangi to govern Mosul.

In Jumad Thani 523 A.H., Sultan Mahmood left Baghdad and went to Hamadan. Dibas left Baghdad, captured Hilla and rebelled against the caliph. The caliph sent an army to attack him. The fight was in progress when Sultan Mahmood heard of Dibas' revolt and reached Baghdad in Thul Qadah 523 A.H. Dibas left Hilla for Basra. He looted

Basra and hid in the mountains. Sultan Mahmood went back to Hamadan. In Shawwal 525 A.H., Sultan Mahmood passed away. His son Dawood succeeded him. His name was read in the Friday sermon in the provinces of Jabal and Azerbaijan.

In Thul Qadah 525 A.H., Dawood marched from Hamadan to Zanjan. Meanwhile he heard that Sultan Masood came from Jurjan and captured Tabrez. Dawood at once rushed to Tabrez and besieged it in Muharram 526 A.H. A series of battles started between the uncle and the nephew. Finally, they were reconciled. Dawood left Tabrez and went to Hamadan. Masood came out of Tabrez and began to collect an army and when a great army was raised, he sent word to caliph Mustarshid in Baghdad that his name should be read in the Friday sermon. The caliph replied that at the time Sultan Sanjar's name was being read in the Friday sermon and that his and Dawood's names would not be read for the time being. In the meantime, Seljuq Shah bin Sultan Muhammad raised an army and camped near Baghdad. The caliph treated him respectfully. On the other side, Sultan Masood won the sympathy of Emaduddin Zangi the ruler of Mosul, and requested him to help him. Emaduddin Zangi called on Sultan Masood. Then both went to Baghdad and camped at Abbasia. Seljuq Shah made preparations for the battle and sent Qarajasaqi to face them and after a fierce battle, Zangi's army lost. Emaduddin went to Takrait where Najmuddin Ayyub (Sultan Salahuddin's father) was the ruler. He provided boats for Emaduddin and had bridges constructed across the river. Zangi crossed the river and went to Mosul. Sultan Masood persuaded Seljuq Shah and the caliph through correspondence to agree to the proposal that Iraq should remain under the control of Sultan Masood and Seljuq Shah's name should be read in the sermons of all countries other than Iraq. In keeping with the agreement, Sultan Masood entered Baghdad in Jumad-Thani 526 A.H. and drafted and signed the peace treaty. Mention has been made above that Sultan Tughrul was with his uncle and Dibas who had hid in the mountains and then went to Sanjar. Being acquainted with the situation, Sultan Sanjar along with Tughrul and Dibas went to Rayy and then to Hamadan. On the other side, Masood Shah and Seljuq Shah along with Qarajasaqi left Baghdad to stop Sanjar. Sanjar advanced beyond untrabad and faced Masood and Seljuq Shah while Dibas marched on

to invade Baghdad. Sanjar defeated Masood and Seljuq and the caliph left Baghdad and faced Dibas and forced him to retreat. Sultan Sanjar forgave Masood and Saljuq and treated them with honor. He made his nephew Tughril the ruler of Iraq and ordered his name to be read in the Friday sermon. In the meantime, in Thul Hijjah 527 A.H., news came that the ruler of Mawaraunnahr had made preparations to revolt. Sanjar left for Khorasan at once. At that time Sultan Dawood bin Mahmood was in Azerbaijan. He raised an army and moved towards Hamadan. Opposing him on the other side was Tughril. Dawood lost and went to Baghdad. Sultan Masood parted company with Sultan Sanjar and went to Baghdad. Both Dawood and Masood jointly requested the caliph to allow them to capture Azerbaijan. It was duly granted and both expelled Tughril's men from there and captured it. Tughril fought but lost and fled. Sultan Masood occupied Hamadan and Sultan Dawood took control of Azerbaijan. Sultan Masood was informed in Hamadan that Sultan Dawood had announced his independence in Azerbaijan so he marched on him. Tughril found an opportunity and collected an army and began to conquer the province of Jabal. Sultan Masood came to confront him but he was defeated in Ramadan 528 A.H. and went to Baghdad while Tughril went to settle in Hamadan. In detail, the stories of the civil wars among the Seljuqs in very lengthy and characterless. Sultan Tughril died and Sultan Masood conquered Iraq. Then there arose differences between caliph Mustarshid and Sultan Masood. The caliph came out to fight and both the armies indulged in fighting and killing. The caliph's army betrayed him and deserted. He was defeated and imprisoned in a fort in Hamadan. When the news reached Baghdad, there was sadness everywhere. During the same period, Iraq and Iran underwent a series of earth tremors for several days. Sultan Sanjar wrote to his nephew Sultan Masood to go to the caliph in person and ask for his forgiveness. The earthquakes and the desertion of the mosque by the people are not ordinary events. Take the Amir al-Muminin to the capital Baghdad with honor. Sultan Masood obeyed and personally went to the caliph. The army that accompanied Sultan Masood included 17 persons belonging to Qaramata or Batini sect. Sultan Masood was unaware of their presence. These Batinis went to the caliph's tent and attacked and killed him. When the people found



out about his death, they arrested the Batinis and ultimately killed them, Sultan Masood was completely shocked. This happened on Wednesday 16 Thul Qadah 529 A.H. When the news reached Baghdad, there was a furor and the people burst out into spontaneous lamentations. Caliph Mustarshid's son Abu Jafar Mansoor took the throne and chose the title 'Rashid Billah' for himself.

### **Rashid Billah**

Rashid Billah bin Mustarshid Billah was born to a slave girl in 500 A.H. When he was born, he had no anus. Surgeons operated upon him using a silver scalpel and he recovered. When Rashid Billah came to the throne in Baghdad, Sultan Masood was not present. Rashid Billah's name was read in the Friday sermon in all the mosques.

After his accession, Rashid Billah used tyrannical methods in collecting money from the people. They complained to Sultan Masood against him. Sultan Masood left for Baghdad. Having heard about his departure to Baghdad Rashid Billah went to Mosul. Sultan Masood entered the city and prepared a book of evidence in which the complaints of the people were recorded, that Rashid oppressed such and such persons, took money by force, shed blood, drank wine, etc. That document was presented to the Chief Justice of the legal scholars for his opinion, whether it was compelling enough to depose the caliph who committed such acts.

The Judge gave the decision that the crimes were serious enough to warrant the caliph being deposed. Therefore Sultan Masood enthroned Rashid Billah's uncle Muhammad bin Mustazhir and took the oath for his caliphate and announced Rashid's deposition. This took place on 16 Thul Qadah. He had ruled for one year. Muhammad bin Mustazhir came to the throne and chose the title Muqtafi Li-Amrillah for himself.

When Rashid was informed of his deposition, he left Mosul and went to Azerbaijan and distributed money among his soldiers. He ruined Azerbaijan by looting it. Then he went to Hamdan where he created havoc and violence on an unprecedented scale. He hanged the people, killed them, had the scholar's beards shaved. Then he went to Isfahan



and besieged it. In the meantime, he fell ill and on 16 Ramadan 532 A.H. a few non-Arabs came and stabbed him to death. When the news reached Baghdad, the official offices were closed for the day to mourn his death. The royal staff and other items signifying the caliph's authority were with him at the time of his death they were then sent to Muqtafi in Baghdad.

### **Muqtafi Li Amrillah**

Abu Abdullah Muhammad Muqtafi Li Amrillah bin Mustazhir Billah was born to a black slave-girl on 12 Rabia Awwal 479 A.H. and came to the throne of the caliphate on 12 Thul Hijjah 530 A.H. After that, Sultan Masood sent an army to punish Sultan Dawood. Dawood was defeated at Moraghah. He reached Khozistan, raised an army and encircled Tashtar.

Saljuq Shah the ruler of Wasit, left to defend Tashtar at the insistence of Sultan Masood but returned after being defeated by Dawood. Sultan Masood did not leave Baghdad because he felt Rashid might invade Baghdad. Masood wrote to Emaduddin Zangi the ruler of Mosul, that Muqtafi's name should be read in the Friday sermon. When Emaduddin did so and expunged Rashid's name from it, the latter grew angry and left Mosul in Rajab 531 A.H. as has already been recorded. A few leaders of Iran decided to go to Rashid to help him and Masood left Baghdad to face them, he defeated them in Shaban 532 A.H. Then he went to Azerbaijan. On the other side Dawood, Khwarzam Shah and Rashid jointly went to Iraq. Sultan Masood defeated them. Khwarzam Shah and Dawood separated from Rashid. Rashid besieged Isfahan and at this time some Khorasani slaves assassinated him. Rashid was buried at Shahrستان in Isfahan. Seljuq Shah left Wasit and captured Baghdad, which caused total anarchy. The people of Baghdad defeated Seljuq Shah and expelled him from Baghdad.

There was lawlessness and disorder in the whole country so much that the cover of the Ka'bah could not be sent in 532 A.H. because the roads were unsafe. Sultan Masood arrived in Baghdad in 533 A.H. and exempted the citizens from paying many kinds of taxes, which they had been paying for a long time. A few years passed in these

pitiful conditions. Besides members of his Seljuqi dynasty, other leaders began to assert their independence.

Sultan Masood overpowered and killed the chiefs whom he suspected. Many leaders were killed or assassinated deceitfully and consequently his forces became very weak. He went and settled in the province of Jabal and left Baghdad and Iraq in a state of restless disorder. Caliph Muqtafi did not hesitate in taking advantage of the situation, he began to enhance his power and influence. The caliph's power was increasing and Sultan Masood and Sultan Sanjar were losing their power gradually. Sultan Sanjar wrote a letter of condemnation to Masood pointing out the harm of killing the leaders and leaving Baghdad. Ultimately, Sultan Sanjar himself visited Rayy in 544 A.H. Sultan Masood also called on him there. In Rajab 544 A.H., Malik Shah bin Sultan Mahmood along with a few leaders invaded Baghdad. Caliph Muqtafi remained inside the fort and fought defensively he called Sultan Masood who was in Rayy for help but he did not come. Though Malik Shah was not able to enter Baghdad, he looted Nahrwan and destroyed it. Masood visited Baghdad on 15 Shawwal 544 A.H. and then went to Hamadan in 545 A.H. Sultan Masood died on 1 Rajab 547 A.H. Masood's minister Khas Baig enthroned Malik Shah bin Sultan Mahmood. However, following Sultan Masood's death the government of the Seljuq dynasty ended in Baghdad and none from it survived to retain the status of ruler of the realm. Sultan Masood is known as the last ruler of the Seljuq dynasty. Immediately after assuming power, Sultan Malik Shah sent a commander to occupy Hillah who captured it. The city magistrate of Baghdad named Masood Jalal went to Hillah, killed Malik Shah's chief and began to rule independently. Caliph Muqtafi himself led the army and invaded Hillah and after capturing it took the oath of allegiance from the inhabitants. Then he invaded Wasit and captured it and returned to Baghdad on 10 Thul Qadah 547 A.H. In 549 A.H., the caliph sent his minister's son and the Amir of Tarshak to conquer Takrait. The Amir of Tarshak and the minister's son had a falling out and the Amir had the minister's son arrested by the inhabitants of Takrait and he returned to Tarshak via Khorasan. In 549 A.H., the caliph himself invaded Takrait and captured the city but failed to capture the fort. He returned to Baghdad, gave his

minister catapults with the capability of breaking up the fort and sent him to conquer Takrait. He went and besieged it meanwhile Arsalan bin Tughral bin Sultan Muhammad took an army and attacked the minister. Hearing this news, caliph Muqtafi left Baghdad to do battle with him. The armies clashed at Aqr Babul and after 18 days of fighting most of the caliph's soldiers had deserted. However, the caliph kept fighting on with his remaining men and was victorious. Arasalan bin Tughral and his chiefs fled from the battlefield. The caliph returned to Baghdad on 1 Sahban 549 A.H. In 550 A.H., he invaded Waquqa but after few days of siege, he returned to Baghdad.

It has been stated above that in 490 A.H., Sultan Barkiaraq had handed over the government of Khuzistan to Sultan Sanjar. When Sultan Muhammad and Sultan Barkiaraq fell out and fought, Sultan Muhammad made his own brother Sanjar the ruler of Khorasan. Since then Khorasan had been under his control and Sultan Muhammad's son regarded him as Sultan Al-Araq. In 536 A.H., a group of Kyrgyz Turks snatched the territory of Mawaraunnahr from the Khans of Turkistan. Sultan Sanjar tried to expel the group from Mawaraunnahr but unsuccessfully and many veteran soldiers lost their lives. Due to Sultan Sanjar's growing weakness, his subordinate rulers became ambitious. Khwarizm Shah declared his independence. The Turks who lived in Mawaraunnahr, known as Oguz Turks, came to Khorasan, looted it and spread anarchy.

These Turks and Sultan Sanjar clashed in 548 A.H. resulting in Sanjar's defeat and capture. The new victors kept him with them and began to loot the cities of Khorasan and also defeated the Kyrgyz Turks who had taken Mawaraunnahr. The Oguz Turks kept Sultan Sanjar as their captive and fixed his salary equivalent to that of a groom. However, interestingly they still read his name in the Friday sermon all over Khorasan. In 551 A.H., Sultan Sanjar escaped from the prison but died shortly after in 552 A.H. After his death, Khawarizm Shah and his descendents captured all of Khorasan and also brought under their control the provinces of Isfahan and Rayy and the territory that the descendents of Subuktageen held and continued to rule until the arrival of Ghengis Khan. During caliph Muqtafi Li-Amrillah's regime, the kingdom of Khwarizm Shah was founded. In 549 A.H., caliph Muqtafi

ordered the ruler of Halab, Nuruddin Mahmood bin Emaduddin Zangi to go to Egypt and intervene in the affairs of the Obeidi ruler. The same year Nuruddin Mahmood was given the title of 'Malikul Adil'.

Sulaiman Shah bin Sultan Muhammad lived with his uncle Sanjar who had made him his heir-apparent. When the Turks arrested Sultan Sanjar, Sulaiman Shah began to lead the remaining members of Sanjar's army. Finding no safe place in Khorasan, he went to Baghdad. He visited the caliph's court in Muharram 551 A.H., took the oath for him and was given the position of Deputy of the Ruler. His name was read in the Friday sermon in Baghdad. In Rabia Awwal 551 A.H., Sulaiman Shah left Baghdad for the province of Jabal. In Thul Hijjah 551 A.H., Sultan Muhammad brought the ruler of Mosul and other chiefs into his army and they invaded and encircled Baghdad. Nuruddin Zangi wrote a condemnatory letter to his younger brother, the ruler of Mosul, Qutubuddin that he should not have taken part in the siege of Baghdad and so Qutubuddin evaded fighting against the caliph. Consequently, Sultan Muhammad lifted the siege in Rabia Awwal 552 A.H. and went to Hamadan. Qutubuddin returned to Mosul. Sultan Muhammad bin Mahmood bin Malik Shah contracted a lung disease after the siege of Baghdad and remained in Hamadan until he died there in Thul Hijjah 534 A.H. Differences cropped up among the Seljuqi princes about the accession. Finally, Sultan Muhammad's uncle Sulaiman Shah who had been under the custody of Qutubuddin Zangi in Mosul was enthroned. Sulaiman Shah still had to face resistance from the princes finally his government was established. Soon after that, one of his commanders Sharfuddin arrested him and his minister and killed them. Following this Sharfuddin proposed the name of Arsalan Shah bin Tughril for the throne and wrote to his Atabek Alidkaz (Editors note: Atabek or Atabeg a slave tutor whose influence could rise to the highest levels even becoming the ruler of certain territories) to bring Arsalan Shah. Alidkaz arrived in Hamadan with his army and had Arsalan Shah's name read in the Friday sermon. Alidkaz was one of Sultan Masood's slaves and an atabek of a high position. Following Sultan Tughril's death he married his wife who was Arsalan Shah's mother. After the succession ceremony of Arsalan Shah Alidkaz was appointed as the supreme Atabek. He sent an application to the caliph in Baghdad that Arsalan Shah's name be read in the Friday

sermon there. The caliph humiliated and expelled the messenger. The caliph's minister made a move to have Mahmood bin Malik Shah bin Mahmood's name read in the Friday sermon. At the time Mahmood, a minor, had been taken to Iran by his father's men. The Iranian ruler Zangi bin Wakla Salghari snatched Mahmood from them and imprisoned him in the fort of Astkhar. The caliph's minister, Aunuddin Abul Azfar Yahya bin Hubairah, wrote to the Iranian ruler to release Mahmood, take the oath for his caliphate and have his name read in the Friday sermon in his occupied territories. Zangi complied with the minister's order. Alidkaz wrote to Zangi to take the oath for Arsalan Shah. Zangi sent the refusal and collected an army. Alidkaz sent armies to Iran and battles were fought without any tangible results. On 2 Rabia Awwal 555 A.H., caliph Muqtafi Li-Amrillah died. He ruled for 24 years and 4 months as caliph. His son Abul Muzaffar Yusuf succeeded to the throne with the title of Mustanjid Billah.

Muqtafi Li-Amrillah liberated himself from the influence and power of the Seljuq kings and ruled over Iraq and Baghdad independently and that is why he is regarded as the most famous and powerful caliph among the last weak caliphs.

### **Dailmia and Seljuqia**

After having gained power the Dailmia or the Buyid dynasty disgraced the Abbasid caliphs and did considerable damaged to the Islamic caliphate during their regime. There were continuous riots between the Shia and Sunni in their time and the power of the Muslims gradually declined. When the Seljuq's took their place and came to power, the honor of the caliphs and the status of the caliphate increased. The Seljuqs treated the Abbasid dynasty reverently and the Seljuqs were far more powerful than the Buyids. The Seljuq Sultans in general did not betray the caliphs. During their dynasty, the Muslims regained their lost power and glory. The Seljuqs were more capable of conquering and governing than the Buyids and they were more religious minded. During the last days of their rule, their internal strife and civil wars put an end to their power and this is a malady from which no dynasty in the world is free. During caliph Muqtafi's regime, the Seljuqs met their end although the Seljuq chiefs continued to rule over small tracts, they lost their existence as major rulers.

### **Mustanjid Billah**

Mustanjid Billah bin Muqtafi Li-Amrillah was born to a Garjistani slave-girl named Taoos. He was made the heir-apparent in 547 A.H. and took the throne in Rabia Awwal 555 A.H. after his father's death. In 556 A.H., the Turkamans, the Kurds and the Arabs rebelled one after another and caliph Mustanjid stamped out these rebellions. The members of Bani Asad tribe at Hillah outnumbered others and they appeared to be inclined to rebel. The caliph sent the army against them and drove them out of Iraq in 558 A.H. In 559 A.H., there was a revolt in Wasit. That revolt was also crushed by military force. In 563 A.H., a man called Ibn Sawar got the better of the last Obeidi ruler of Egypt Azid li-dinillah's minister Shadar and turned him out of Egypt. Shadar left Egypt and went to Al-Malikul Adil Nuruddin Zangi who was one of the chiefs of the Seljuq kings. His father Emaduddin has been mentioned above, Nuruddin Mahmood Zangi ruled the territories of Halab and other parts of Syria and was loyal to the caliph in Baghdad. Among Nuruddin Mahmood's chiefs Najmuddin Ayyub his son Salahuddin Yusuf bin Najmuddin Ayyub and Najmuddin Ayyub's brother Asaduddin Sherkoh were holding high and honorable posts. Al-Malikul Adil Nuruddin Mahmood sent Asaduddin Sherkoh to Egypt with two thousands cavalry soldiers. Sherkoh killed Ibn Sawar but Shadar did not keep the promises he had made in Nuruddin's court. It was at that time the Christian crusaders were attacking the courts of Syria and Egypt and they had captured some coastal areas. Sherkoh was asked to clear these Christians out of the country. Sherkoh and his nephew Salahuddin, after a few months of fighting drove them out of Egypt and then Sherkoh went to Syria. In 564 A.H., the Christians invaded Egypt again. Azid li-dinillah again requested Al-Malikul Adil Nuruddin Mahmood Zangi to help him. Nuruddin again sent Sherkoh with Salahuddin to Egypt. As soon as the Christians heard about his arrival, they escaped and Azid li-dinillah made Sherkoh his minister and kept him in Egypt. Shadar revolted and Sherkoh exterminated him at once and became busy with his ministerial tasks. When Sherkoh died in 565 A.H. in Egypt, the ruler of Egypt, Azid li-dinillah

Obeidi appointed Sherkoh's nephew Sultan Salahuddin Yusuf to the post of the minister. Sherkoh and Salahuddin remained loyal to Sultan Nuruddin Mahmood. In this way, the Islamic forces of both Syria and Egypt defended against the invasions of the Christians. The caliph also met with success in suppressing all the rebellions in Iraq and restored his power and respect. Al-Malikul Adil Nuruddin Zangi was loyal to caliph Mustanjid and complied with all his orders. This was a time of peace and relaxation for the Muslims of Iraq and Syria. On 9 Rabia Thani 566 A.H., caliph Mustanjid Billah fell ill and died. During his caliphate Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani died. After Mustanjid, the people enthroned his son Abu Muhammad Hasan and gave him the title of Mustazi Bi-Amrillah.

### **Mustazi Bi Amrillah**

Mustazi Bi Amrillah bin Mustanjid Billah was born to an Armenian slave girl. After assuming power, he established justice and excused all public taxes.

Within one year of his accession to the throne, the Obeidi (Fatimid) rule in Egypt ended. It has been stated above that Salahuddin Yusuf had become the Prime Minister of the last ruler of the Obeidis, Azid li-dinillah. Salahuddin put an end to the restlessness in Egypt and toned up the administration and began to govern taking all departments into his own hands. Nuruddin Mahmood Zangi the ruler of Syria wrote to Sultan Salahuddin at the end of 566 A.H. to introduce caliph Mustazi Bi-Amrillah Abbasi's name in the Friday sermon in Egypt. Salahuddin considered himself to be Sultan Nuruddin's deputy. He complied with his order with fear and in the beginning of Muharram 567 A.H., he read caliph Mustazi's name on the first Friday before the day of Ashoorah (the 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram which is a day sacred to the Shiites) and no one opposed him and the caliph's name was heard with approval. Azid li-dinillah died in Muharram 567 A.H. and on the next Friday the name of the caliph of Baghdad was read in the Friday sermon throughout all of Egypt. Sultan Salahuddin sent this information to Sultan Nuruddin and he conveyed the good news to caliph Mustazi in Baghdad. When the news reached Baghdad, the caliph celebrated it by having trumpets sounded and celebration



lamps lit. The caliph sent his chief servant Sandal to Nuruddin with royal robes and black flags for Nuruddin and Salahuddin. Nuruddin expressed a deep sense of joy at Sandal's arrival and sent the caliph's royal gifts to Salahuddin. The rule of the Obeidis ended in Egypt and in its place was established the rule of the Ayyubia dynasty. Nuruddin had the titles to rule Syria, Jazirah and Mosul and then the caliph sent to him the documents to rule over Egypt, Syria, Mosul, Bakr, Khalat, Rome, and Iraq and gave him total power in these territories by appointing him Deputy to the Ruler. Salahuddin ruled as governor and king in Egypt on behalf of Nuruddin. Salahuddin was loyal to Nuruddin, who was loyal to the caliph of Baghdad. Now all the rulers began to fear caliph Mustazi and his name was read in the Friday sermons everywhere. No one dared to oppose him. He appointed Qutubuddin Qaimaz as the chief of the armies. In 570 A.H., Qaimaz showed signs of rebellion against the caliph. When the caliph was besieged in his palace, he climbed on the roof of the palace and shouted "O people! Qutubuddin Qaimaz's wealth and goods are lawful for you." As soon as the people heard this, they stormed Qaimaz's house and looted it. He fled Baghdad and went to Hillah while he was on the way to Mosul death overtook him. In 573 A.H., caliph Mustazi's minister Azduddin Abul Farah Muhammad bin Abdullah set out for Hajj with a big caravan. A Qaramati assassinated him on the way. The caliph then appointed Abu Mansoor Zahiruddin bin Nasr also known as Ibn Ata as his minister. The caliph died in Thul Qadah 575 A.H. after ruling for nine and a half years. Minister Zahiruddin bin Ata enthroned the caliph's son Abul Abbas Ahmad who chose Nasir Li Dinillah as his title.

### **Nasir Li Dinillah**

Nasir Li Dinillah bin Mustazi Bi Amrillah was born to a Turk slave girl named Zamurrad on 10 Rajab 553 A.H. and he took the throne in Thul Qadah 575 A.H. after his father's death. He was a very wise, farsighted and alert Caliph. Immediately after becoming caliph, he sent messengers to all the Islamic territories asking all the nobles to take the oath for his caliphate. At that time, Bahalwan bin Alidkaz ruled over Hamadan, Isfahan and Rayy. The chief scholar Sadruddin was sent to him to administer the oath. Bahalwan at first refused to oblige



but when his chiefs threatened him that if he did not take the oath they would turn against him, he took it. Alidkaz Atabak died in Hamadan in 568 A.H. Alidkaz as has already been mentioned had been Arsalan Shah bin Sultan Tughral's tutor and guardian. Alidkaz had married Arsalan Shah's mother so Arsalan Shah was his stepson. After Alidkaz's death, his son Bahalwan became Arsalan Shah's tutor.

In 573 A.H., Arsalan Shah also passed away. Bahalwan enthroned Arsalan's son Tughral bin Arsalan bin Tughral and he himself continued to administrate over the above-mentioned territories. When Bahalwan bin Alidkaz died in 582 A.H., Hamadan, Rayy, Isfahan Azerbaijan and Armenia were under his jurisdiction and Tughral bin Arsalan was under his guardianship. After Bahalwan's death, his brother Uthman known as Qazal Arsalan bin Alidkaz took over the position. Tughral bin Arsalan remained under his guardianship for a short time and then he decided to part company with him. Along with some noblemen, Qazal captured a few cities. There were several battles between Qazal Arsalan and Tughral and gradually Tughral become more powerful while Qazal Arsalan grew weaker. Qazal Arsalan sent a message to the caliph's court, declared his allegiance to him and expressed the apprehensions for the safety of caliph's court in view of the growing power of Tughral.

Caliph Nasir Li Dinillah had the palaces of the Seljuqi Kings in Baghdad pulled down and sent Abul Muzaffar Obeidullah bin Yunus with an army to help Qazal Arsalan. Obeidullah had just reached Qazal Arsalan when he had to confront Tughral at Hamadan on 18 Rabia Awwal 584 A.H. In a pitched battle, Tughral became victorious and Obeidullah was captured. The rest of the army fled and retreated all the way to Baghdad. However, there was another battle between them and Qazal Arsalan defeated Tughral's army and arrested him and imprisoned him in a fort. Qazal Arsalan began to rule over Hamadan, Rayy, Isfahan and the other territories. He introduced his name in Friday sermon and minted coins in his name. In 587 A.H., Tughral was killed in prison and this brought the rule of the Seljuqs to an end. Thus, the sultanate founded by Tughral Baig met its end with a Sultan of the same name, Tughral Baig.

When Amir Isa, the ruler of Takrait died in 585 A.H., his brothers

captured it. Caliph Nasir sent his army and occupied it and granted feudal estates to Amir Isa's brothers. Similarly, he won Sharana in 586 A.H. and gave away feudal estates to the nobles there. Then he sent armies to Khozistan and captured it and deputed Tashtageen bin Bahiruddin as the ruler on his behalf. At that time, Rayy was ruled over by Qatlagh bin Bahalwan bin Alidkaz. Khawarizm Shah forced him to evacuate and captured it. Muayeduddin Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ali after conquering Khozistan at the caliph's instance and had given it to Tashtageen, was about to march with his army. Qatlagh bin Bahalwan called on him and persuaded him to invade Rayy. Muayeduddin went to Hamadan with Qatlagh where Khawarizm Shah's son was camped with his army. When he heard about his arrival, he left and went to Rayy and Muayeduddin easily occupied Hamadan. Then Muayeduddin went to Rayy. Ibn Khawarizm left Rayy and Muayeduddin occupied it too and gradually conquered the whole region, which was under Qatlagh's possession. Khawarizm Shah sent a messenger to Muayeduddin and asked him to vacate the territory but he replied that the territory was conquered by caliph Nasir Li Dinillah's army and it would never be returned. Khawarizm invaded Hamadan with a large army. Meanwhile Muayeduddin died in Shaban 592 A.H. but his army gave a tough fight to Khawarizm Shah's army. Finally, due to the absence of its commander, the Baghdad army suffered defeat and Khawarizm Shah captured Hamadan. After that Khawarizm Shah went to Isfahan, conquered it and put it under his son's care and left a large army for its defense. Then caliph Nasir Li Dinillah gave an army to commander Saifuddin who drove away Khawarizm Shah's son and captured Isfahan. Then Hamadan, Zanjan and Qazween also came under the caliph's occupation. In 602 A.H., Tashtageen, the ruler of Khozistan passed away and the caliph deputed the deceased's son-in-law Sanjar to rule. In 606 A.H., the caliph became angry with him. During that period, as has been stated above, Iran was governed by Atabak Sad Zangi bin Wakla. The caliph sent his deputy minister with an army to punish Sanjar. When the minister reached Khozistan, Sanjar left and went to Sad Zangi in Iran. Sad received him warmly. In 606 A.H., the caliph's army occupied Khozistan and sent for Sanjar but he refused to come to the Caliph. The Baghdad army marched towards Shiraz the

capital of Iran. Atabak Sad Zangi wrote letters recommending Sanjar to the deputy minister. Finally, Sanjar went to the deputy minister in 608 A.H. who took him to Baghdad and brought him to the caliph's court in chains. The caliph sent his servant Yaqoot as the ruler of Khozistan and he set Sanjar free and honored him with a royal robe. In Muharram 613 A.H., the caliph sent his grandson Muayed bin Ali bin Nasir Li Dinillah as the ruler of Tashtar, which was part of Khozistan whose father had died in Thul Qadah 612 A.H. Aghlamash who was one of Bahalwan's chiefs, he conquered Jabal province by virtue of his bravery and wisdom and ruled it with stability. He was killed by a Qaramati in 614 A.H. After his assassination the Iranian ruler Atabak Sad bin Wakla wanted to capture his territories while Khawarizm Shah, the ruler of Khorasan and Mawaraunnahr wanted to capture them from the other side. Atabak Sad Zangi took an army and conquered Isfahan. Khawarizm Shah was also marching on Isfahan. They clashed at Rayy and after a bloody battle Atabak Sad was defeated and captured. Khawarizm Shah brought under his control all of Aghlamash's territories and sent an application to the caliph in Baghdad for his own name to be read in the Friday sermon as his Deputy Ruler. He was refused. Khawarizm then sent his army to Baghdad but it was caught in a heavy snowstorm and most of his soldiers perished. The Turks and the Kurds looted the remainder of the army. Those who somehow survived these disasters returned to Khawarizm in a very miserable condition. He considered this an ill omen and returned to Khorasan. He deputed his son Ruknuddin and appointed Emadul Malik Sadi the Prime Minister and deleted the caliph's name from the Friday sermon in the territories he occupied, this occurred in 615 A.H.

In 616 A.H., a Mongol tribe, which lived in Tamghach in the Chinese mountains, revolted. Their native country was a six-month journey from Turkistan. The chief of the tribe was Genghis Khan who belonged to the Turk tribe Tamarji. Genghis Khan invaded Turkistan and Mawaraunnahr, snatched these countries from the Turkanul Khata tribe and brought them under his control.

Then he attacked Khawarizm Shah and captured Khorasan and Jabal from him. Then he conquered Araniah and Sherwan. One group of

these Tatars went to Ghazni, Sajistan and Kerman and conquered them. After having suffered defeat at the hands of the Mongols, Khawarizm Shah went to a place in Tabristan and died after ruling for 21 years. After defeating Khawarizm Shah they defeated his son Jalaluddin bin Khawarizm Shah at Ghazni and Genghis Khan pursued him up to the Sindh River. Jalaluddin crossed the river and entered India. After living in India for a short time, he went to Khozistan and Iraq in 622 A.H. and captured Armenia and Azerbaijan. Genghis Khan and his conquests will be dealt with in detail in a later chapter. After ruling for 47 years caliph Nasir Li Dinillah died in Ramadan 622 A.H.

It is said that as Khawarizm Shah had quarreled with the caliph and put a stop to the reading of the latter's name in the Friday sermon in his own countries, it was the caliph who instigated Genghis Khan to attack him because it was too difficult for him to punish Khawarizm Shah. Nasir Li Dinillah had spread his spies in all the cities of his territories. He wanted to keep himself abreast of all the affairs of his subjects. Most of them believed that he had under him some jinn who supplied information to him. He was astute in political strategies and this helped establish a certain type of awe concerning him in his territories but the people were not happy. They were sick of his high-handedness and severe punishments. During his regime, Sultan Salahuddin conquered many Roman cities and in 583 A.H., he recaptured Jerusalem after 91 years of occupation by the Christians.

In 589 A.H., Sultan Salahuddin Yusuf the conqueror of Jerusalem died. During the reign of caliph Nasir Li Dinillah, Abul Faraj Ibn Jozi, Imam Fakhruddin Razi, Najmuddin Kubra, Qazi Khan passed away. After Caliph Nasir Li Dinillah, his son Abu Nasr Muhammad came to the throne and chose the title Zahir Bi Amrillah for himself.

### **Zahir Bi Amrillah**

Zahir Bi Amrillah bin Nasir Li Dinillah was born in 571 A.H. He came to the throne after his father's death on 1 Shawwal 622 at the age of 52. Immediately after assuming power, he turned his attention chiefly to ruling justly. He provided relief to the people and exempted them from paying all taxes. He restored to them all their property, which the earlier caliphs had confiscated. He used to repay the debts of the

people personally. His motto was: "I have opened the shop in the evening. Let me do some good deeds." One day he was going to the treasury and a slave said to him, "The treasury remained full during your father's times." The caliph said, "I see no practicable way to fill my treasury. I know only how to make it empty. Filling it is the job of the merchants." He funded many scholars. His regime resembled that of Omar bin Abdul Aziz. The whole country enjoyed absolute peace and prosperity and justice but he did not live long. He died after being caliph for only 9 and a half months on 15 Rajab 623 A.H. After him, his son with the title Mustansir Billah came to the throne.

### **Abu Jafar Mustansir Billah**

Mustansir Billah bin Zahir Bi-Amrillah was born to a Turk slave girl and came to the throne after his father's death in Rajab 623 A.H. He resembled his father in moral virtues. He tried to impart and promote justice as his father had done. He was very fond of observing religious rites. He founded a school named Mustansaria in Baghdad and appointed renowned scholars as teachers there. The construction work started in 625 A.H. and ended in 631 A.H. He started a library in which rare and invaluable books equal to 160 camel loads were kept. The teachers for 'Hadith' 'Grammar' 'Medicine' and 'Heredity' were separately appointed. The school was responsible for the provision of their food, sweets, dry fruits and other things. It received much popular support. In 628 A.H., Malik Ashraf laid the foundation of Darul Hadith Ashrafia. It was completed in 630 A.H. In 629 A.H., Muhammad bin Yusuf bin Hud revived the Abbasid dynasty in Andalus. In 634 A.H., Alauddin Kaiqabad bin Qalj Arsalan bin Sulaiman bin Qatlamash bin Israil bin Seljuqi who had been ruling over the greater part of Asia Minor died and his son Gheyathuddin Kaikhusru came to the throne. In 641 A.H., the Mongols attacked and defeated him. He surrendered to them and agreed to pay tribute. The two centuries of Seljuq rule ended in Asia Minor. Gheyathuddin Kaikhusru ruled by paying tribute to the Mongols until 656 A.H. when he died. During the same period, the great ancestor of the Ottoman dynasty began his rise to power. This will be narrated in detail later.

Caliph Mustansir tried his level best to create an efficient administration and promote justice in the country. However, as the Turks and the Mongols started conquering states and provinces one after another, his income diminished. Salahuddin Yusuf's sultanate, which consisted of Syria and Egypt, was ruined due to disunity. The flood of Mongols looted and desolated all the territory extending from Mawaraunnahr to the Roman (Mediterranean) Sea and the Black Sea. At this time, the caliph had Iraq under his control and the Mongols were still wary of him and they did not approach his territories. Just as the Kings of Khorasan, Azerbaijan, Mosul, and Syria feared the Caliph's displeasure similarly the Mongols recognized the leadership of the caliph of Baghdad and dared not behave impertinently. The Mongols were sun-worshippers and did not come as Muslims like the Seljuqs so they did not care whose name was read in the Friday sermon at the mosques. Therefore, the name of the Baghdad caliph was being read in the Friday sermon as usual and that made him feel relieved. Having seen the surge of the Mongols Caliph Mustansir's brother, Khafaji, who was valiant and courageous, used to declare. "If I become caliph I would rub off the name of these Mongols beyond the river Jejoon."

In 641 A.H., Caliph Mustansir died. The people did not enthrone his brother Khafaji who was qualified in all respects and fully deserved it. They preferred Mustansir's son Abu Ahmad Abdullah because he was soft hearted and simple. The members of the court liked a caliph in whose regime they could make progress and grow more powerful. So, Abu Ahmad Abdullah came to the throne of caliphate with the title Mustasim Billah.

### **Mustasim Billah**

Mustasim Billah bin Mustansir Billah was born to a slave girl named Hajir in 690 A.H. and came to the throne after his father's death. He lacked courage and intelligence. Though he was religious minded and observed all 'Sunnahs', he appointed Muayeduddin Ibn Alqami as his minister who was a fanatic Shia. As soon as he became minister, he turned the caliph into a puppet and became the ruling power in the government. Ibn Alqami began to push the Shias forward and allowed

them many concessions. The unorthodox additions to the religion which were current during the regime of Dailam were revived, which resulted in the outbreak of riots between the Shias and the Sunnis similar to those found during the Dailamis regime. He became busy trying to obliterate all signs of the Abbasids and establish the Caliphate of the Alawiites. In Baghdad, some sensible people knew about his evil plans. They informed the Caliph of Ibn Alqami's treacherous plot but the caliph was such a great fool and coward that he narrated all these complaints to Ibn Alqami himself. Ibn Alqami convinced him of his loyalty and declared them to be treacherous and traitors. The Caliph was fully convinced of his allegiance. That increased his influence all the more and the tongues of his supporters were silenced. Then Ibn Alqami led the Caliph to drown himself in sports and drinking and thus he became safe from any harm. After a few days, the caliph's son Abu Bakr attacked Karkh near Baghdad, to stop their heavy handedness and passed uncomplimentary words against Ibn Alqami. It made Ibn Alqami sad and he complained to the caliph but the caliph, regardful of his son, did not punish Abu Bakr in accordance with his wishes. That made Alqami all the more treacherous. He entered into correspondence with Genghis Khan's grandson Hulegu Khan who was the greatest chief of the Mongols and the King of Khorasan. When Hulegu Khan got the first letter, he did not pay much attention to it. Ibn Alqami had written that he would help him capture Baghdad and Iraq easily without any bloodshed and so he should invade them. Hulegu said to his emissary only this: 'What Ibn Alqami promises has no guarantee. How could we believe him?' In fact, the Caliph's huge army, the Arab valor and the courage of the people of Baghdad had impressed the Mongols and their armies had suffered defeat at the hands of the Arab tribes in Syria. Ibn Alqami went to the caliph and after complaining about the shortage of revenue and increase in the salaries of the army, he proposed a reduction in the number of soldiers. The Caliph agreed. The major part of the Baghdad army was sent to other cities and states. Those who remained were allowed to collect the revenue from the market for the payment of their salaries. This caused great agonies to the citizens and looting became rampant. He disbanded many divisions of the army and turned them out. He told the Caliph that they were sent to the



border to check and stop the infiltration of the Mongols. In Hillah, the Shias outnumbered the Sunnis, he goaded them to write letters to Hulegu saying, "Our ancestors had predicted that such and such a Mongol chief would capture Baghdad and Iraq in such and such year. According to that prediction, you are the victorious chief and we are sure that you are going to occupy these territories very soon. We are loyal to you and ask you for security and protection." Hulegu wrote the letter of protection for them and handed it over to the messenger Nasiruddin Toosi who enjoyed a great reputation at Hulegu's court and discharged the duties of minister. He was also a fanatic Shia like Ibn Alqami and he was an accomplice in his intrigue of ruining the Abbasids and establishing the caliphate of the Shiites. Ibn Alqami wrote to Nasiruddin to goad Hulegu Khan to attack Baghdad at any cost and that it was a golden chance to deliver the last mortal blow to the Abbasids. He also wrote a letter to Hulegu Khan that said, "I have evacuated the armies from Baghdad and sent away all the weapons of war. What greater guarantee do you want?" Along with this, he had an application sent him by the ruler of Ardbil, which contained an inducement to launch an offensive against Baghdad. Hulegu received the letters after he had already conquered the Maut Fort of the Qaramata (Ismailites) and the last King of the Ismailites had already come in chains before him. Hulegu sought counsel from Nasiruddin Toosi. He said "Astrology says that Baghdad will come under your control and you will suffer no losses if you invade it." Hulegu sent a huge army as a vanguard to Baghdad. When Mustasim heard about it, he sent Fathuddin Dawood and Mujahideen Ebak with 10 thousand horsemen. The commander of the army was Fathuddin who was a veteran and experienced general and a brave man. The Mongol army was defeated and it retreated. Fathuddin thought it proper to stay there but Mujahideen, due to inexperience, insisted on pursuing them. Being compelled Fathuddin went after the Mongols. Consequently, the Mongols turned back and fought. Those Mongols who had gone into hiding attacked from the rear. The Baghdad army was sandwiched in and was totally at a loss. Fathuddin was killed in action and Mujahideen fled and took refuge in Baghdad. It was because of the bad planning of Mujahideen that the victory of the Baghdad army turned into defeat. But caliph Mustasim, due to his



innate foolishness expressed joy at the sight of the run-away commander. Though the Baghdad army suffered defeat, Hulegu Khan's vanguard was also in disarray with many wounded. So, caliph Mustasim was satisfied that the storm had passed off peacefully. But as Ibn Alqami who had kept the caliph completely in the dark was laughing at the latter's stupidity, news suddenly spread that Hulegu Khan had laid siege to Baghdad with a huge army. The citizens tried to defend and for 50 days they did not let the Mongols enter the city. The Shias of the city approached Hulegu Khan's army one after another and received a pledge of safety and apprised him of the situation in the city. Minister Ibn Alqami remained in the city and kept sending information minute by minute. As the minister had no sympathy with the people of the city, they gradually grew weaker. At last minister Ibn Alqami came out of the city, met Hulegu Khan, sought security and safety only for himself and returned. He said to the caliph, "I have a pledge of safety for you too. Come let us go to Hulegu. He will let you continue to rule over Iraq as the Mongols allowed Gheyathuddin Kaikhusru to rule over their territories." The caliph came out of the city with his sons and went to Hulegu's army. Hulegu saw him and said, call all the members of your government and the religious and legal scholars of your city too." Hulegu Khan detained the caliph. Hearing the caliph's command the scholars and government leaders came out of the city and went to the Mongol army. All of them were slain one by one. Then Hulegu said to the caliph, "Send the message to all the citizens to lay down their arms and come out of the city empty handed." Mustasim sent the message to them. They came out and the Mongols began to put them to the sword. All of them numbering several hundred thousand soldiers, cavaliers and nobles of the city were cut to pieces. All the moats and ditches of the city were filled with the corpses. The water of the river Tigris turned red due to the excess of blood of the slain. The Mongols entered the city. Women and children with the Quran on their heads came out but none was spared. Hulegu Khan ordered his army to undertake a general massacre. The Mongols killed everyone they laid their hands on. Only a few persons who hid themselves in wells and similar places survived. The next day, Friday in Safar 656 A.H. Hulegu Khan entered Baghdad taking Caliph Mustasim with him, he

held court in the Caliph's palace, called the caliph before him and said to him, "We are your guests present us something". The Caliph was so terror stricken that he couldn't find the right keys. At last, the locks of the treasury were broken. Two thousand fine clothes, one thousand dinars and gold ornaments were presented to Hulegu Khan. He said "Had you not given these things to us, they would have still been ours." Having said so, he distributed them among his courtiers. Then he ordered the treasures, which no one knew about, to be located. The Caliph at once told him of their whereabouts. The ground was dug up bringing into view tanks full of gems and bags of coins. Ten million and six hundred thousand Muslims were butchered in and around Baghdad and the Caliph had to watch all these tragic scenes. Hulegu kept the Caliph without food and water. He felt hungry and asked for food. Hulegu ordered a tray full of gems to be put before him to eat. The Caliph said, "How can I eat it?" Hulegu sent word, "Why did you not spend these incredible things to save the hundreds of thousands of lives of the Muslims and give it to your soldiers to fight on your behalf and save your ancestral country and protect you from us?" Then he held a counsel with his men regarding killing Mustasim. All favored his death. However, Nasiruddin Toosi and Ibn Alqami seeing the irony of luck said to Hulegu Khan, "Mostasim is the caliph of the Muslims. Swords should not be stained with his blood. He should be covered with and rolled in a blanket and kicked." The task was handed over to Ibn Alqami. He rolled his master into a blanket and tied him to a pillar and had him kicked so much that he died. Then his dead body was again kicked and run over by the Mongol soldiers until it was torn to bits. Ibn Alqami stood by laughing and thinking that he was avenging the Aliwiites. In short, the dead body of the caliph did not find either a shroud or a grave and none of the Abbasid dynasty who was captured by the Mongols survived.

Then Hulegu turned to the royal library, which contained countless books. All the books were thrown into the Tigris River, they formed a sort of dam in the river and gradually the water swept them away. The water of the Tigris, which had turned red with the blood of the slain, now turned black with the ink of the books and it continued to be so for a long time. All the royal palaces were looted and then leveled to the ground. It was such a horrible carnage and catastrophe

that it is unprecedented in the history of the world. It was such a calamity for Islam that they have called it a small dooms day. Ibn Alqami who engineered the annihilation and blood shed now tried and wanted Hulegu Khan to appoint some Alawi ruler in Baghdad and confer on him the title of caliph. In the beginning when Hulegu Khan invaded Baghdad, many promises were made to him and he was sure that Hulegu Khan would make some Hashmite Alawi caliph and he (Alqami) would be made his Deputy Ruler but Hulegu Khan deputed his own men to rule Iraq. Ibn Alqami was at his wit's end seeing these developments. He planned and planned, entreated and begged Hulegu Khan to achieve his end but Hulegu Khan chided and drove away him away like a dog and for a short time, he continued to serve the Mongols like an ordinary slave but ultimately the frustration killed him. Caliph Mustasim Billah was the last caliph of the Abbasids who ruled in Baghdad. After 656 A.H., Baghdad ceased to be the capital. There was no caliph for three and a half years in the world after caliph Mustasim. After him, they took the oath for his uncle Abul Qasim Ahmad in Rajab 659 A.H.

### **The Abbasid Caliphs in Egypt**

Sultan Salahuddin bin Ayyub had founded the sultanate of Ayyubia after the Obeidia (Fatimid) dynasty, which has been recorded in detail above. The power of ruling over Egypt, Syria and Hijaz remained in the dynasty of Sultan Salahuddin until 648 A.H. As Sultan Salahuddin was a Kurd, the sultanate of Ayyubia is also called the sultanate of Kurdia. The seventh King of the sultanate of Ayyubia was Malik Saleh who was the great grandson of Salahuddin's brother. In order to save himself from family rivals he purchased twelve thousand slaves from Mount Qaf, that is, the province of Sarkesia and raised a modern army. During his rule, the Christian King of France brought soldiers on board ships and invaded Egypt. The Egyptian army fought with the invaders humbled and defeated them and captured the French King on the battlefield. It raised the status of the Egyptian army's reputation. After Malik Saleh his son, Malik Moazzam Tooran Shah came to the throne. But after two months, Malik Saleh's slave girl Shajratuddur usurped the throne. Her regime gave rise to discontent

and rebellion. After ruling for three months she went into retirement and a man of the Ayyubia dynasty, Malik Ashraf Musa bin Yusuf, was formally enthroned. His regime strengthened the slave's power. Finally, in 653 A.H. they enthroned Azizuddin Ebak Salehi with the title Malik Moizz marking the end of the Ayyubia dynasty and the beginning of the slave dynasty (Mamluk dynasty) that lasted for many years. In 655 A.H., Malik Moizz's young son Ali succeeded to the throne. He was given the title Malik Mansoor and Amir Saifuddin Mamlook was assigned as his tutor and mentor. In 657 A.H., they deposed Malik Mansoor based on a religious judgment that he was a minor and therefore not eligible to be the leader, he was replaced by Amir Saifuddin with the title Malik Muzaffar. The slaves selected 20-25 persons from among themselves and gave them the authority to rule as a council. They were regarded as the council of ministers and they chose one from among themselves as the amir or king. After assuming power, the Amir was enthroned as a King and was called Sultan or Malik. The Sultan used to distribute important portfolios and posts among the members of the council. The Prime Minister was chosen from among the 20-25 council members also. Head of the Police and Head of Finance were considered to be major portfolios. The rest were awarded lesser posts and powers. Sarkasian slaves were purchased at government expense if there became a shortage of soldiers. A slave dynasty also was in power in India too with the exception of two or three kings all the kings were descendents of King Shamsuddin Altamash and they carried the title of slave but had become very sophisticated as the dynasty evolved but the slaves holding the throne in Egypt were often slaves who had been purchased on the auction block and then by virtue of their personal merits gained access to the throne. Historians have not pay heed to this fact and failed to state in unequivocal terms this quality of the slave dynasty of Egypt. In fact, the slave dynasty of Egypt needed reforms on some points but it is most admirable that the subjects had full liberty in choosing their ruler. The reign of this dynasty will be recorded in a separate chapter. At this stage in the narrative it is necessary to mention that Malik Muzaffar after hearing about the annihilation and plunder of Baghdad, the rest of Iraq, Khorasan, Iran, Azerbaijan, Jazirah and Mosul and the Mongols destruction of the

territories of Iraq with all their power, was galvanized into action. He along with his slave armies and armies of freemen left Egypt for Syria. On Friday 15 Ramadan 655 A.H., the general of the slave army Ruknuddin Baybars gave them a crushing and humiliating defeat the like of which they had never suffered before. Thousands of the Mongols perished on the battlefield and the rest fled in terror. The slaves captured huge quantities of spoils and inspired fear in the Mongol's hearts. The Mongols turned upside down many kingdoms but they never looked towards Egypt out of fear of them. The slaves pursued them up to Halab and then returned to Egypt. On 16 Thul Qadah 658 A.H., Ruknuddin Baybars ascended the throne after Malik Muzaffar's death and chose Malik Zahir as his title. He came to know that the last and 37th caliph of the Abbasid dynasty Mustasim Billah's uncle Abul Qasim Ahmad who had been in prison in Baghdad for a long time escaped at the time of the desolation of Baghdad and Mustasim's murder. He found out that he was alive and in hiding somewhere in Iraq. Malik Zahir sent a 10 member Arab delegation from Egypt to search for him. They succeeded and returned to Egypt with him. Hearing the news of his arrival Malik Zahir along with all the scholars and the members of the Egyptian government came out of Cairo to receive Abul Qasim and escorted him respectfully into the city. They took the oath for his caliphate on 13 Rajab 659 A.H. and proposed the title Almustansir Billah for him. The king had his name read in the Friday sermon and imprinted on the coins. He came to the grand mosque with the caliph in procession on Friday. The king spoke about the virtues of Abbas in the Friday sermon and made a prayer for the caliph. After the Friday prayer, the caliph presented him with a royal robe. On Monday 4 Shaban 659 A.H., tents outside Cairo were pitched. The caliph held court and declared Malik Zahir as the Deputy Ruler. Malik Zahir assigned servants for him and reserved a part of the Egyptian treasury for him with authority to use it as he liked. After three years, he went to Syria with Malik Zahir's army to fight against the Mongols and he was lost or killed in the battle. Following his disappearance one year passed when Malik Zahir received information about a lost Abbasid Prince. He found him and enthroned him as the caliph. His name was Abul Abbas Ahmad bin Hasan bin Ali bin Abu Bakr bin Khalifa Mustarshid Billah bin Mustazhir Billah.

Up to his great grandfather, none had been a caliph and thus the Abbasid caliphate started again with a descendent of caliph Mustarshid. His title was suggested as Hakim Bi-Amrillah. He was enthroned on 8 Muharram 661 A.H. In 674 A.H., Malik Zahir conquered Sudan. It was considered to be a grand victory. Malik Zahir died in Muharram 676 A.H. then Malik Sayeed came to the throne. In 678 A.H., Malik Mansoor took the throne. He gave a crushing defeat to the Mongols in Syria in 680 A.H. In 689 A.H., he died and Malik Ashraf succeeded him. On 18 Jumad Awwal 701 A.H., caliph Hakim Bi-Amrillah died after reigning for 40 years 5 months and 10 days and was buried in Cairo, he was succeeded by his son Abu Rabi Mustakfi as caliph. The slave government remained in power until 923 A.H. Sarkeshi slaves, called Bahriya slaves, reign was followed by another community of slaves in 784 A.H. called Charkasi slaves who began to rule as kings. The last Sultan of the Bahriya slaves, Sultan Malik Saleh was deposed in Ramadan 784 A.H. and was replaced by Barqooq Charkas with his title Malik Zahir. Until 922 A.H., Charkasi (Gurji) slaves ruled as kings in Egypt. The last King of Gurji or Charkasi slaves Sultan Tooman Beg suffered defeat at the hands of Sultan Saleem Uthmani and Egypt was annexed to the Ottoman Empire. As mentioned above, the second chain of the Abbasid caliphs began with the slave rule in Egypt and it ended with the rule of the slaves in 922 A.H. The condition of the Abbasid caliphs in Egypt was that of figureheads only. They were caliphs in name only and they named their heir apparent. The Muslim Kings of India and other countries received the documents authorizing their Kingship and received titles from them. The slave Kings of Egypt also considered themselves to be the Deputy Rulers of those caliphs, treated them with respect and read their names in the Friday sermons. However, in reality they enjoyed no power or glory. Their salaries were fixed. The Egyptian Sultan did not let them go anywhere freely. These caliphs with the members of their families used to live imprisoned within their palaces. They were called caliphs but they were as ignorant and as far from understanding the meaning of the Islamic caliphate as the sky is far from the earth. After capturing Egypt, Sultan Saleem Uthmani subjugated the Abbasid caliph Muhammad of Egypt who was the 18th and the last caliph in the

chain of the Egyptian Abbasid caliphs. The flag and robe that the Caliph had as symbols of the Caliphate with him were given to Sultan Saleem with his consent. Sultan Saleem took the last Abbasid caliph with him when he left Egypt. That Abbasid Caliph made Sultan Amir his heir-apparent and thus in 922 A.H. the Abbasid caliphate that began with Saffah and had been reduced to name only after 800 years met its end and the Ottoman dynasty which deserved the Caliphate most at that time began. There were 37 Caliphs in the Abbasid dynasty that ruled in Baghdad and Iraq plus 18 in Egypt a total of 55 Caliphs.

While following the chain of the Abbasid dynasty, we have moved away from studying important branches of rulers and other developments, which we will now address. Normally at the end of a dynasty, we make some summary comments and review. However, we have said what we wanted to say about the Abbasid Caliphate and do not want to lose the natural impression, which is produced on the heart after reflecting on the consequences or end of this grand dynasty of Caliphs.

## Chapter 6

# **A General Study of Umawi and Abbasi Caliphates**

### **Part One**

The caliphates of Banu Umayyah and the Abbasids are over. But their study conjures up a small picture of their Caliph's rule, power, conquests and battles. What the historians in general write about the condition of the kings and rulers has been narrated above. The art of writing history has improved and it also looks into the principles of government, society, educational institutions of the times and the governments of the time period in question. Twice the amount of pages of this short history would be required to fulfill these requirements and cannot be fully delved into in these volumes. Taking into consideration these deficiencies, a few facts are given below on the authority of some reliable books.

### **Important positions and offices of the Government**

The caliphate of Banu Umayyah was a victorious and international government during its period of rule the Arabs were regarded as



victors and other nations as the vanquished. The Arabs had religious zeal and to them no laws except the laws of the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) were binding and practicable. The Muslims fought among themselves but the common life style of the inhabitants of the Islamic countries like Arabia, Syria, Egypt and Iraq and the restoration of peace despite internal invasions and battles did not demand any complex system of the government. The Caliph sought consultation but he was not compelled to seek it either. He received consultation, which was unsolicited and sometimes he had to accept it. The plain living of the Arabs was reflected in their government as well. Even an ordinary Bedouin could have access to the Caliph and his royal presence did not reduce their linguistic power. The Caliph sent deputies to rule over the provinces and states and they enjoyed total power and royal support there. The Caliph was the ruler of the entire Islamic world similarly he was also its commander-in-chief. The Governors of the Provinces and States were the Kings and the commanders of their Provinces or States. They were also the religious heads 'Imams' and Chief Judge. Whenever the Caliph had any doubt regarding a religious issue, he had no inhibitions in consulting the religious and legal scholars. Similarly, the Governors and the rulers of States also had to seek their opinions. Sometimes a Governor was appointed for a province and along with him the Caliph appointed another person as chief judge.

The functions of the governor were to maintain law and order in the country, to invade, to be always ready for defense against the enemies, to protect the subjects and to collect taxes and deposit them in the treasury. The functions of the judges were to promulgate Islamic laws, to settle disputes and force the people to uphold the Islamic law. The judge was not dependent upon the governor. Sometimes along with the judge and governor, a tax collector was separately appointed by the Caliph who handled all financial matters. In that case, the Governor was the commander of the armies. In short, simplicity was the hallmark of the caliphate of Bari Umayyah. All grievances were redressed in the light of Islamic law and the subjects were happy and prosperous due to the system of equal justice. They were neither unduly taxed nor was it necessary for the Caliph to spend lavishly on the administration. The Caliph was considered to be

the spiritual head of the whole Islamic world as well as the temporal ruler. For this reason it was easier to maintain peace in the country. There was no regular post of minister or advisor. During an emergency, anyone could discharge the duties of minister or advisor.

During the Abbasid caliphate, the Iranians and the Turks began to enjoy the rights of the victorious or conquering nation besides the Arabs and by degree, the vanquished nations grew more powerful. Therefore, complications developed in the administration. If the Arabs, the Iranians and the Turks were kept on an equal footing according to the Islamic laws and real equality was maintained, there would have appeared more simplicity and virtue in the administration than had been available even during Banu Umayyah's times. Unfortunately, situations kept cropping up and opposition and rivalry between these nations kept increasing. The greatest cause for this was that the Iranians were preferred over the Arabs. The Caliph's court adopted the Iranian and the Sasanid way of living and rejected the comfortable simplicity of the Arabs. Because of this, the Islamic caliphate suffered so many complications that gave way gradually to the decline in reliability, power and ultimately led to its end. However, the purpose here is to present a list of the major portfolios of the Abbasid Caliphate.

### **The Prime Minister**

In the beginning, the Caliph had only one minister and he fully acted as the Caliph's deputy and head of all departments. Later on, when it transpired that one man could not do justice to all the departments, other ministers under the Prime Minister were appointed. There were matters, which only the Caliph was authorized to do and only the Prime Minister could advise him. At the time of seeking opinion, the Caliph invited not only the Prime Minister but also the other members of the government to participate. Some caliphs for instance Caliph Haroon Rasheed had vested all powers to his Prime Minister in matters of the administration of the country. The Prime Minister himself issued all kinds of instructions and the Caliph was formally informed of them. Such powerful ministers enjoyed high status and they were regarded as having more authority than the Caliph himself.

Later the caliphs began to grow weaker and the Dailami, Amirul Omara or Seljuk, Sultan imposed themselves on the caliphate both the Caliph and the Sultan had their own separate Prime Minister. In those times, to be the minister of the Caliph was not a major position. During this dual charge regime sometimes the Caliph's minister was called president and the Sultan's minister was named minister. Sometimes the Caliph's minister enjoyed more powers than the Caliph and when the Sultan appointed the Caliph's minister, the Caliph would be his own minister's prisoner.

The Caliph used to select the Prime Minister on the basis of his personal knowledge and sometimes he gave the royal robe of the ministry to a man of a lower stratum of society and raised him to the pinnacle of prestige and sometimes a minister's son succeeded his father as minister. Haroon Rasheed's minister Jafar Barmuk, Mamoon Rasheed's minister Fadal, Alp Arslan and Malik Shah's minister Nizamul Mulk are famous ministers.

### **Amirul Omara (Chief Executive)**

This post was created during the declining period of the Abbasid caliphs. Having imposed themselves on the Caliph, the people chose this title for themselves and were granted it from the Caliph. These Amirul Omara were in fact the rulers of Iraq, Iran, and Khorasan and they appointed all their office bearers. The Caliph was a Caliph only in name or only for the purpose of the official oath. The Dailamis' (Buyids) period lasted for 100 years and their rulers were all called Amirul Omara.

### **The Sultan (King)**

Just as the Dailamis chose Amirul Omara as their title, similarly the Seljuks selected the title Sultan for themselves. These Seljuk Sultans were more powerful, more religious, ruled over wider and larger territories and were more loyal to the Caliph than the Dailamis. The Dailamis had seized all the power and influence of the Caliph's court. The Seljuks recognized the Caliph's greatness and allowed them to rule and it was during their regimes to a great extent that the caliphs succeeded in their attempt to get back their power and glory. There

were no posts of Amirul Omara and Sultan in the beginning of the Abbasid caliphate.

### **Amil or Wali (Governor)**

The governors of the provinces and states used to send a fixed amount of his revenue every year to the Caliph's court. He enjoyed absolute liberty in the inner administration of the province and he used to send a fixed amount annually to the Caliph's treasury. It was on a contract basis in most cases. Another form was, the Amir used to send the surplus amount after the annual expenditures were deducted, in this case he had to justify the income and expenditure of his province and he was not responsible to pay a fixed sum. The border provinces, which were far away from the capital usually, used the contract form. A very small sum was realized from those provinces as tax and sometimes the reading of the Caliph's name in the Friday sermon was considered sufficient. The change or removal of the governors in these provinces was not regarded as necessary until they betrayed, opposed or rebelled but the governors of the other provinces were changed after short intervals.

### **Sahebu Shurta (Police General)**

The man responsible for maintaining law and order in the cities, quelling rebellions and arresting thieves and robbers was known as 'Sahebu Shurta'. We may call him the Chief of Police. This man had his headquarters in Baghdad and appointed deputies in the other cities of Iraq. Sometimes he was the commander in chief of the Iraqi forces and the Governor of a Province. Tahir bin Husain was the Sahebu Shurta who ultimately became the governor of Khorasan. This was a very responsible post and no ordinary man would be appointed to it.

### **Hajib (Chief Body Guard)**

Besides being the Caliph's bodyguard and the officer of bodyguards, the Hajib had a highly intimate relation with the Caliph. He always accompanied him at home and on journeys and was the trusted man in his privacy. All the servants of the Caliph's palace and the

watchmen of the police were his subordinates. He was ever ready to teach manners to every new entrant to the Caliph's court and to carry out all his commandments.

At times the Prime Minister had to yield to the Hajib. He was the Caliph's confidant and shared his secrets. Haroon Rasheed had Jafar Barmuk killed by his Hajib, Masroor.

### **Qadiul Qudat (Chief Justice)**

The permanent post of the Qadiul Qudat (Chief Justice) was first created by Haroon Rasheed, this post continued until the end of the Abbasid period. The Qadiul Qudat appointed his deputies in all provinces and territories on his own authority. His main functions were to see that the people followed the Shariah laws and to settle disputes. It was a very high post. His position at the court was in no way inferior to that of the commander-in-chief and the Prime Minister. A new Caliph was accorded the status of the real Caliph only when the Qadiul Qudat recognized him as such. It was the Qadiul Qudat who issued the Fatwah (legal religious pronouncements) for the dismissal of the Caliph. The Caliph could sack the Qadiul Qudat but at the time of the accession of a new Caliph, the Qadiul Qudat's approval was essential. In important matters concerning invading a country or appointing the governor of a province he was consulted. If the Caliph, in the capacity of the commander-in-chief, invaded a country, the Qadiul Qudat accompanied him or he sent a deputy with each army. His seal on pacts, agreements, documents of Governorship, important commandments of the Caliph and wills was compulsory.

### **Raisul Askar (Army Chief)**

Though every Caliph, every Amir, every minister and every important person could be the commander, there was a Raisul Askar or the commander-in-chief of the regular army of the Caliph. It was not a permanent post. Every division of an army had a commander. The Caliph could appoint who ever he liked as the Commander-in-chief. The commander of big and important expeditions was generally the Raisul Askar.

### **Mohtasib (Inspector)**

The duty of a Mohtasib was to make rounds in the city, deter the people from violating the Shariah laws and punish them for committing misdeeds. They morally reinforced them by helping to remind the people to implement their Islam in the market places and other public places. He was subordinate to the Qadiul Qudat and was under the Chief of Police's authority. In modern terminology, we may call him a municipal inspector. He was also authorized to inspect the weights and measures of the traders and shopkeepers and arrest and punish any defaulters. A Mohtasib along with his subordinate staff was appointed in every town and market complex.

### **Nazir or Mushrif (Vigilant)**

The Caliph appointed a Mushrif to look after all the government departments. He was given the status of a minister. A separate Mushrif or inspector for each department was appointed under him. After receiving reports from all the departments, the Mushriful Ala (Chief Inspector) presented a report to the Caliph. They were an internal department for the improvement of the administrations efficiency.

### **Sahebu Bareed (Postmaster General)**

The Caliph appointed Sahebul Bareed or Postmaster General to run and look after the Postal department in each province. His duty was to see to the departure of the royal post and arrange the horses at outposts for the messengers. It was his responsibility to see that a proper number of horses, mules or camels were always kept ready.

It was his duty to gather news and information of important events from all the provinces and communicate it to the Caliph's court. He had a body of sleuths under his command they supplied information about the subjects, the officers and the conditions of the departments of each province. He appointed his deputies in every city. This department dispatched public letters from one place to another. It also used pigeons for sending messages. The Postmaster General kept with him a register that contained the details about every post office, location, directions, and distances of the outposts and the list of the staff.

### **Katib (Secretary)**

The Caliph appointed a Katib (Secretary). He held the rank of minister. His duty was to read to the Caliph the letters from abroad, write orders, issue instructions at the command of the Caliph and keep the necessary documents in safe custody. He had under him the offices of different departments such as the office housing the copies of royal orders, the registry office, and the office of military communications.

### **Amirul Minjaniq (Military Engineer)**

He held the post of chief military engineer. Making roads, selecting places suitable for a battlefield and encampments, pulling down the enemies' forts and fortifications were part of his duties. His counsel and proposals regarding laying siege to forts or cities were given specific importance.

### **Amirut Tamir or Raisul Banna (Chief Architect)**

He was the chief Engineer. He was responsible for constructing and repairing the royal palaces, public works construction projects, digging canals, constructing bridges and embankments.

### **Amirul Bahr (Naval Commander)**

The chief of the warships and all naval forces was called Amirul Bahr. There were many officers under him and each of them had a war ship under his own command and reported to the Amirul Bahr.

### **Tabib (Doctor)**

Tabib was the chief medical officer. More than one experienced and efficient doctor was always present at the court of the Caliph and in the capital. They took part in academic meets and were part of the community of intellectuals. Many hospitals and medicine shops were run at government expense under his supervision. They came from all countries and religions.

## **Other Important Departments and Offices**

Though considered to be an independent ruler the Caliph was not supposed to rule with absolute impunity. When he was made Caliph and the oath was taken for him, he had to take a pledge that he would follow the Quran and the Prophet's traditions. The Scholars and legal experts had a right to object to any unlawful acts and were able to control him. If the Caliph's power came in conflict with their rights the subjects would fight against him and support the scholars and experts to the point of deposing the Caliph. Sometimes the scholars evaded discharging their duties and that led to corruption and weakness. Sometimes the Caliph would take advantage of his greatness and grandeur and issue orders without consulting anyone and have them implemented. However generally, all the public work was done in accordance with certain fixed rules and regulations and thus the government machinery used to run smoothly. That is why despite battles among the Sultans and dissension among the Amirs, the masses still had the opportunity to make progress in the arts and sciences and become more cultured and disciplined during the reign of the Abbasid caliphate. In the beginning of the Abbasid caliphate, the foundations of different arts and sciences were made. Invaluable documentation had already established. Then the Abbasid caliphate began to lose strength but the pace of development of their arts and sciences and inventions did not slow down. One of its greatest contributions was the implementation of a system of government, which was based on Islamic principles that remained undisturbed even after the government had become weak with battles and strife. Even during the period of anarchy and discontent, its character was ever present. That was why the educational, social and moral developments did not receive major setbacks. Although the governments of the Samanis, Saffaris and Seljuks were not stable, great scholars were born during their reigns and under their jurisdiction and reputed scholars of the arts and sciences left their immortal works behind.



## **Diwanul Aziz**

The Caliph's court was known as Diwanul Aziz. Similarly, the office of the prime minister who dominated over all government departments and had his say in all matters and who appeared to virtually hold the reins of power in his hands was also called 'Diwanul Aziz'. All offices and departments were under him. The Prime Minister was supposed to issue orders after consulting with the heads of all the departments concerned.

## **Diwanul Khiraj**

This may be called finance or tax revenue department. Sometimes it was directly handled by the Prime Minister and sometimes by a separate minister who was subordinate to the Prime Minister. Sometimes the Caliph did not let the Prime Minister have any link with the Finance Minister but had him connected to his own Katib (Secretary). Sometimes the Finance Minister appointed his deputies in the provinces himself and they were free from subordination by the governor of the province concerned. Generally, the Finance Minister empowered the Governors of the provinces to spend money but not without making them answerable for what they spent.

## **Diwanul Jizya or Diwan Dhamam**

These offices housed the documents related to the Jizya (tax on non-Muslims for exemption from military duty) and the Dhimmis (non-Muslims who paid a tax for being exempted from military duty). It was responsible for the collection, fixation and exemption of the Jizya. The chief of the department was regarded as a subordinate to the Finance Minister. He had to carry out the Qadiul Qudat's (Chief Justice's) instructions related to the reduction or exemption of the Jizya.

## **Diwanul Askar**

This department maintained the army register of military personnel. It had a direct link either with the Prime Minister or the Caliph. It disbursed salaries to the soldiers, the commander-in-chief was also considered to be an officer of this department. He was concerned with

this department to the extent that he was responsible for the disbursing of the salaries in his presence. The purchase of horses, mules, and camels, the collection of arms, and tailoring of uniforms were functions of this department.

### **Diwan Shurta**

The Police officers and their management were under the supervision of these offices. The head of this department was the Chief of Police. The Mohtasibs also discharged their duties under this department. The salaries of the police of this department were higher than those of the soldiers and they were recruited with great care.

### **Diwan Dhaya**

This department was concerned with the management of the revenue of the territories of Iraq considered to be the Caliph's feudal property. Its responsibility was to increase the produce of the fields and keep them always ploughed, seeded and green.

### **Diwan Bareed**

Headquarters of the postal department were in Baghdad. It had details regarding maps of the territories, lists of the post offices, necessary directions about each stage of the road, instructions for the employees, reports of the services of the employees and workers and records and guidelines for peace and safety of the roads.

### **Diwanun Nafaqat**

This department maintained the registers concerning the expenses, rewards, daily allowances and gifts of the Caliph's palaces.

### **Diwanut Tauqi**

The department of the royal seal kept copies of each order issued by, or with the seal of the Caliph. This department, which may also be called the Official Registry department, was under the charge of the Katib (Secretary).

## Diwanun Nazr Fil-Mazalim

The incharge of this department was the Mushriful Ala (Chief Inspector). He used to test the performances of the workers, correct errors in the registers and offices, inspect the offices and deter the workers and officers from wrong doing.

## Diwanul Anhar

This department undertook the repair, safety of the canals and enhancement of the resources of irrigation. In addition to the farmers, the wealthy and other interested parties concerned with welfare activities were at liberty to dig canals. If the farmers or the inhabitants of a particular region wanted to dig a new canal, the government paid half of its expenditure. In cases of disputes between the two villages over the distribution of water, the government would let the farmers settle their disputes by peaceful means otherwise the department intervened and settled the problem. The benefit that the government received from the new irrigation canals was the increase in the collection of revenue, when production increased, the government received higher payments.

## Diwanur Rasayel

The office of Correspondence's main functions was to prepare the manuscripts of pacts and agreements, sealing them with the official seals after having copied the royal orders, stamping these orders and putting them into envelopes, keeping copies of important judgments, sending copies of the royal mandates to provinces and cities, dispatching public petitions to the departments concerned and proposing the proper administrative policies for the offices.

## Darul Adl

It could hear the appeals of every court. The Judge of Baghdad, the Chief Justice, ministers, legal experts and scholars of the city would gather and hear the major cases at the Darul Adl (Hall of Justice). The Caliph would also participate as President. If the Caliph himself was involved in the case, the Prime Minister or the Chief Justice would

preside over it. If the Governors were charged with rebellion or the Generals were accused of hatching a conspiracy they were given a chance to clarify their position. In this court, only those persons who could present written proof of his good conduct and standing duly signed by a judge and a Mohtasib (local inspectors of the market place) could stand witness. People of great status feared giving evidence at this court in case their conduct was questioned and objected to and their evidence rejected.

### **Darul Qada**

The Judge's Court was a unique form of the Islamic justice system. Every Judge of the city could be a judge and magistrate in the Judge's Court. If anyone filed a case against the governor or administrator of the city, he had to appear in this court as an ordinary citizen and give proof. In order to handle the cases of non-Muslims, judges from among them were appointed. In the court of a non-Muslim judge, all civil and criminal cases would be heard and judgments delivered. In the case where one party was a non-Muslim the parties could by mutual consent take their case to whatever court they liked but an appeal in such cases would be heard by the Judge's Court. Even the non-Muslims in general liked to have their disputes settled at the Judge's court.

### **General Conditions of the Government**

The government did not impose itself in the life-style and internal relations of the common people. The internal management of the cities and villages were in the hands of the citizens. They chalked out the plans of their safety quite freely. If they resented an administrator, they sent an application to the Caliph for his transfer and the Caliph generally granted it. No administrator was appointed without the consent of the citizens concerned. The inhabitants of a city were themselves a military force. At times, an army would surround the administrator of a city, he would face his enemies with the help of government forces but the citizens could compromise with the besieging enemy and the administrator would have to leave the city.

The official in general dared not deprive the citizens of their rights. Even an ordinary man could have access to high officials including the Caliph and say fearlessly whatever he wanted to say. The caliphs tried their utmost to endear themselves and prove themselves beneficial to their people. The Abbasid caliphs honored and patronized the arts and sciences.

### **Traveling Facilities**

The Abbasid caliphs made careful arrangements for the safe passage of all travelers on the roads of Iraq, Hijaz, Iran, Khorasan, Mosul, and Syria. Groups of soldiers were assigned for the purpose of safety of the roads and outposts were set up at appropriate distances. Royal horses, camels and other means of traveling were available at every stage. A rest house was kept reserved for travelers at every stage of the road. Even the public could ride on the royal horses belonging to the postal department. Sometimes if the roads became dangerous due to robbers or rebels, royal forces would accompany a band of traders or other travelers. Similarly, for the sake of protection and safety an army was put under the charge of the Amirul Hajj (leader of the Pilgrimage), which went with the caravans of the pilgrims.

### **Trading Facilities**

Every city had a committee of merchants and it was not compulsory for government officials to be part of the committee. The merchants themselves fixed the rates of commodities. Taxes were nominal on commodities. In this respect, the merchants did not have any grievance. They were given more respect than even government officials. They were welcome to pay visits to the Caliph's court. The city officials always tried to keep the merchants who brought commodities from abroad satisfied and pleased. They treated the merchants who brought commodities from outside as those who had made a public service. In case the goods were not sold, the official or the Sultan or the Caliph would buy it even if it was not needed at the time because they did not like to send the merchant away frustrated. If a caravan of merchants was looted in the jurisdiction of a particular administrator or governor, he was considered to be extremely careless

and worthless. The noblemen of the city used to invite and entertain the merchants and treat them as honored guests. If a merchant came from a foreign country, the Caliph himself would invite him to hear the stories of his journeys and would see him off with gifts and rewards. This attitude gave great incentives and encouragement to trade and so it flourished considerably. That was why during the reign of the Abbasid caliphs all kinds of trade and industry fully developed and each city came to acquire popularity for a particular industry. In this way, the products of one place began to be exported to another.

The Arabs had been the traders since ancient times. However, during the period of the Abbasid caliphs, the Iranians also developed an interest in trade. It developed to such an extent that the Muslim traders began to visit the coasts of the northern seas and the northern and southern parts of Africa, anthropologists have discovered Muslim artifacts manufactured in Baghdad during the period of the Abbasid caliphs in Sweden and Madagascar. Some caliphs for instance Wathiq Billah, exempted foreign merchants from paying taxes and he levied no taxes on imports.

### **Government Tax Collectors**

Instead of collecting money on cultivated or agricultural produce, share distribution was used. Forty percent of the produce was given to the government tax collector while sixty percent was left with the farmer. If the farmer had to work using irrigation, seventy five percent of the produce was left for him and twenty five percent was the government tax. On some agricultural products, only twenty percent was collected as tax and eighty percent was left to the farmer. On grape and date orchards, the tax was levied in cash on the basis of share distribution basis. In some provinces like Bahrain, Iraq and Jazirah, there were farmers on whose lands tax was fixed by agreement at the time of victory during the period of the first Caliphs. That was considered a permanent settlement and no enhancements could be made on it. At the time of fixing taxes, most of the lands were left tax-free and the farmers were exempted from paying taxes for the slightest reason. The government took special care to see that the farmers were happy and prosperous so that the population and the

prosperity of the territory would not suffer. A very large area of the territories collected only ten percent of the produce as tax. The Dhimmis who were not recruited in the army and the protection of whose lives rested on the government used to pay a nominal tax to cover military expenditures. Those who willingly joined the army were exempted from the payment of Jizya. There was conscription for the Muslims. The old and children among the Dhimmis were exempted. The Muslims had to pay another tax called Sadaqat (form of charity) while the wealthy among them had to pay the Zakat (this is the obligatory tax on wealthy Muslims), which could be called a wealth tax.

### **Government Expenditures**

Along the Roman borders, the armies were stationed permanently in cantonments. They used to get higher pay than the other armies. One army always remained in the capital. One part of the army was deputed along the roads for safety and distributed over thousands of outposts. A good number of soldiers were kept in major cities and other central and key places. The police that worked under the command of the 'Mohtasib' and under the authority of the Chief of Police received their salaries from the government treasury. The major portion of the treasury was spent for the armies. That included the police of the postal department, horses and camels and the workers in the postal department. The militiamen who were required to participate in the Roman border wars received their food, horses and other essential things from the government. In their absence cash and salaries or foodstuff were given to the members of their families. In times of war, the entire load and provision of the army fell on the government treasury. The chain of battles with the Romans continued and it led the caliphs to found cities and construct forts along the Roman borders. All the expenses of the armies of the provinces had to be borne by the treasuries of the provinces. However, the expenses of the armies on the Roman borders, security of Baghdad and the rest of Iraq, armed soldiers for postal safety, the Caliph's personal army and the militiamen all were paid by the Caliph's central treasury. Every new Caliph coming to the throne used to reward the army.

Important workers were awarded feudal estates and their salaries were fixed. In addition to construction of cities and forts, schools, bridges, canals, wells and mosques were continuously being built. Manufacturers, inventors and craftsmen were given bonuses and salaries, which encouraged them considerably and inspired others. Holistic doctors, medical doctors, poets, scholars and legal experts were amply rewarded and honored. Some Christian and Jewish doctors grew so rich in Baghdad that except the Caliph no one else excelled them in wealth. There were many schools in Baghdad the expenses of which were met with great royal liberality. In the same way there were high quality Halls of Knowledge in other cities. Factories for manufacturing arms, clothing, sugar, medicines and perfumes were set up in big cities and the government patronized them. Owing to the Caliph's special attention mills for making silken and woolen cloths and factories for manufacturing glass utensils made rapid progress. The Caliph had to have readily available with him in the treasury thousands of royal robes, shawls, woolen clothes, beautiful ceremonial dresses, costly swords, spears, shields and bows in order to reward and honor the extremely brave, the scholars, manufacturers and inventors. He used to purchase valuable and precious objects brought into the country by foreign traders and deposited them into his treasury and distribute them among the people as gifts and rewards.

### **Military Preparedness**

The total strength of the army varied at different times. There were a number of armies. Each army was made up of ten thousand soldiers. Its chief was called Amir of the army. He had ten commanders under him and each of them had one thousand soldiers under his command. Each commander had ten deputies and each deputy had one hundred soldiers under him. Similarly, each deputy had ten sergeants and each sergeant had ten soldiers under his command. Sometimes the caliphs brought about some changes in the uniform of the army in accordance with their tastes. For instance, Motasim had lace sewn to the uniform of the Turk army. Sometimes the military uniforms were of costly brocade. A huge number of camels and mules for carrying equipment accompanied them. The army had spears, swords and shields with



them and was called 'Harbiah' (fighting army). The army that carried bows and arrows with it besides swords and shields was known as 'Ramiah' (shooting or throwing army). Each soldier had a helmet, iron armlets, gloves and socks. Every army had a team of engineers, physicians and surgeons. It carried with it stocks of medicine and all the necessary pharmaceuticals and other paraphernalia required for their mobile hospital with means of carrying the injured. Each army had a cavalry made up of veteran spearmen and archers.

When the caliphate grew weaker and Banu Buwayh became dominant, the custom of granting feudal estates to the army chiefs began and they were allowed to collect their salaries from the government collector of revenues who obtained the funds from that particular tract of land. This practice opened the door to the perpetration of atrocities on the farmers. When the Seljuks came into power, they introduced the custom that every administrator and every ruler was considered to be a general and they were supposed to be ready with an army in proportion to the collection of revenue from that part of the country. In other words, the army chiefs were made up of independent feudal lords by being the owner of part of the country their duty was to come with a fixed number of soldiers in times of emergency. The government of the whole territory thus came into the hands of the army chiefs and the old administrators and former feudal lords lost their power. The army had nothing to do with the royal treasury, the army chiefs had the authority to collect their salaries from their lands and property and to reduce or increase them as they saw fit. With his back to the wall the Caliph with the loss of revenue had to reduce the number of his soldiers leading ultimately and automatically to the seizure of power by the Sultans. When the Seljuks became weaker, the Caliph of Baghdad captured Iraq and directly increased his revenue and introduced again the old practice of separating the army from the administrative and managing functions.

### **Educational Developments**

The Baitul Hikmah (House of Wisdom) had been established in Baghdad in the time of Haroon Rasheed. During Mamoon's, regime a big department began the work of translating Greek, Hebrew, Sanskrit

and Persian books. The Caliph arranged debates and academic discussions and participated in them. The scholars used to meet at the residences of the rulers, ministers and other important persons. Academic issues were hotly debated and listeners' minds would be highly illuminated. Just as a number of scholars were busy writing, compiling and translating books there was an equal number of them copying books. Booksellers were held in great esteem and busied themselves in copying books. They kept a number of copyists and calligraphers engaged in this work. People undertook journeys to distant lands for academic research and acquisition of knowledge and they proved themselves to be an invaluable asset to their countrymen and the royal court on their return. *Ilmun Nahwa* (Arabic grammar) was developed during the period of the Abbasid caliphate and many books were written on this subject. People penned books on travels. *Ilmul Ahadith* (Science of the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ) were compiled and edited. Books on the 'Usool (rules of principles) Ahadith were written. Similarly thousands of books on *Ilmul Kalam*, *Ilmul Fiqah* (Islamic Law) and *Ilmul Orod* were written. Not only in Baghdad but also in all the major cities and territories, authors were engaged in scholarly pursuits. Very valuable books on medicine, physics, surgery and anatomy were written and published. Medicine shops were first started during this period. Similarly, the credit of systematizing and compiling the art of written history belongs to the same period. The Abbasids are also credited with very important discoveries in astronomy.

Mamoon Rasheed had the distance of one degree measured on the surface of the earth and thereby proved twice that the circumference of the earth was 24 thousands miles. He had observatories constructed and books written on the art of building. The telescope and the watch were also inventions of the Abbasid period. Remarkable books on mysticism, morality and theology were authored during this period. Not only were books on mathematics, chemistry, geology, zoology, botany and logic written but also the Muslims established these sciences. To fully do justice to the scholastic achievements of Muslims during this period would require a separate voluminous book. In these academic developments, the Umayyad caliphate of Andalusia did not lag behind and was the forerunner of many of the world's modern sciences.

## Part Two

We have examined until this point in the narrative the life of the Prophet (ﷺ) and we have read in detail the conditions and the situations concerning the rightly guided Caliphs. No one after the Prophet (ﷺ) was permitted by Islamic law to inherit his property based on his relationship with him (ﷺ) or become the ruler or Caliph of the government founded by him (ﷺ), and this decision was taken in keeping with Islamic teachings. Each of the rightly guided Caliphs had sons and those sons were very capable but none of the caliphs wanted to nominate their sons nor did the rule and government become an inheritance in their families. Only after Ali (رضي الله عنه), his son Hasan (رضي الله عنه) was made Caliph by the people of Kufa. After six months, he handed the caliphate and the government over to Amir Mu'awiyah (رضي الله عنه). What Amir Mu'awiyah (رضي الله عنه) did was to nominate his son as his successor and instead of on his own accord giving it to a person chosen by the majority of the Muslims, he handed the Islamic government to his descendent as a personal inherited right. Never the less he did not officially say that the Islamic government was the property of a single individual family and so he tried to have all the Muslims agree to take the oath for Yazeed. This act of Amir Mu'awiyah (رضي الله عنه) caused the Muslims of that period to struggle hard to remedy it and this brought about the disaster at Karbala. It was due to these efforts that Abdullah bin Zubair (رضي الله عنه) was made Caliph and Amir Mu'awiyah's family was deprived of the Islamic government. Along with Mu'awiyah's act the Jew Abdullah bin Saba's anti Islamic conspiracy proved effective in disturbing the basic system of Islamic rule. First, the inner mistake, which was attributed to Mu'awiyah (رضي الله عنه) and secondly the external opposition, which was called Saba's conspiracy combined and turned into a great trial or evil disorder by being presented as Islamic. The result was that this Islamic pillar of government was pushed off its foundation and it also became the target for disaster by anti Islamic forces. The Marwani caliphs strengthened the evil practice of succession and nomination of the future ruler and this enabled those incapable of beneficial rule to hold the caliphate. It dealt a fatal blow to the awe and grandeur of Islamic

rule and in parallel allowed a series of struggles to begin that took advantage of Saba's moves aimed against the Islamic sultanate. Finally, the Abbasids captured the caliphate from the Umayyah caliphs and it marked the beginning of division in the Islamic government. Before the Abbasids Banu Umayyah ruled over the entire Islamic world with a single center and a single caliphate. However, in the beginning of the reign of the Abbasids in Spain a separate Umayyah government was formed that was out of the jurisdiction of the Abbasid caliphs. Then Morocco, North Africa and other territories established separate Islamic governments. After discussing the caliphate of Banu Umayyah, we have finished discussing the Abbasid caliphate leaving the other governments that were founded separately during the period of the Abbasid caliphate and in the third volume we shall study them. It is appropriate here in order to bring the continuity of events and subjects into perspective to give a short description of these ruling dynasties.

## Spain

The Muslims conquered Spain and established their government in 93 A.H. and it was a province of the caliphs of Banu Umayyah. Until 138 A.H., like all other provinces Amirs and administrators were appointed by the rulers on behalf of the Banu Umayyah caliphs. When the Abbasids destroyed the Umayyah government and took it over, the tenth Caliph of the Umayyahs Hisham's grandson Abdur Rahman somehow escaped the bloodthirsty swords of the Abbasids and reached Spain and founded his government there in 138 A.H. When the Abbasid army attacked him, he repulsed and defeated them. He made the Spanish city Qurtabah (Cordoba) his capital and began his magnificent rule. This rule continued in his family until 422 A.H. The pomp and dignity and the power and greatness of these Spanish caliphs threw the entire continent of Europe into deep consternation and their love of knowledge and culture won them international praise and admiration. Their feats and achievements are more interesting and instructive than those of Banu Abbas. In 422 A.H., there began a state of anarchy in Spain and it led to the down fall and end of the grand caliphate of the Umayyah dynasty. After that, Spain was divided into small Muslim states and they made cities like Cordoba, Seville, Granada and Valencia

their capitals. After a short time, the Muslim Kingdoms of Africa brought most of Spain under their subjugation. The Christian Kings took advantage of the civil wars raging among the Muslims inciting the Muslims to fight among themselves and when they became extremely weak, the Christian conquerors of Spain subjected them to a repression that no nation had been subjected to or had been inflicted on the face of humanity. The history of Spain makes the Muslims shed tears of blood. The story of the ruin of the Spanish Muslims has the power of wounding the hearts and minds of the believers.

### **The Sultanate of Idrisid in Morocco**

In 172 A.H. Morocco became separated from the Abbasid caliphate and an independent government was formed. Though this sultanate was in the neighborhood of Spain, it was opposed to the Spanish caliphate as it was to the Abbasid caliphate. It lasted for about 200 years. The Idrisi Kings ruled for 100-125 years and then the Obeidis started ruling in North Africa. Finally, it was divided in several parts and after surviving as ordinary rulers and chiefs their rule ended.

### **The Sultanate of Aghlabia in North Africa**

In 184 A.H., the province of North Africa (Tunis) separated from the Abbasids and the descendants of Ibrahim Aghlaba governed with great pomp and dignity for more than 100 years. In 219 A.H., the sultanate of Aghlab captured the Island of Sicily from the Christians and annexed it to its own territory and continued to rule over it until the end of their dynasty. There were a few very courageous and able rulers in this dynasty. When the Obeidis (Fatimids) revolted, they founded their sultanate on the bases formed by the Aghlaba. They seized the Idrisi government and made the Aghlab's capital of Qairwan their own capital. Egypt came under their control and then they moved their capital to Egypt. The history of the Aghlab government is more interesting than that of the Idrisi. It met its end in 296 A.H. This dynasty conquered not only Sicily but also Malta and Sardinia. They had a powerful naval force and they dominated the Mediterranean Sea. At times, their fleets attacked and looted the coasts of Greece, Italy and France.

## **The Sultanate of Ziyad In Yemen**

In 203 A.H., Muhammad bin Ziyad who was a descendant from Ziyad bin Abi Sufian, was appointed as the governor of Yemen. His dynasty continued to rule in Yemen until 402 A.H. Muhammad bin Ziyad founded the city of Zubaid and made it his capital. He conquered the province of Tahama adjacent to Yemen and he captured Hadramut also. There were a few very lucky and powerful Kings in this dynasty. In 288 A.H., the Alawis took a part of his territory and founded the Zaidiyah government. The borders of this sultanate continued to shrink. Though the Zaidiyah sultanate was independent, the names of the Abbasid caliphs were read in the Friday sermons there. Besides Zaidiyah when another independent government was established in a part of Yemen, they removed the names of the Abbasids from their Friday sermons. When the Zaidiyah sultanate grew weak, their slaves and slaves of the slaves began to rule. After that, a number of dynasties ruled in Yemen one after another. After the Zaidiyah there followed the Yafuriah, Najahiah, Sailhiah, Hamdaniah, Mahdiah, Zoriah, Ayyubiah, Rasooliah and the Tahriah dynasties which ruled independently until 1000 A.H. Some of these dynasties were Shia and some were Sunni. Their histories have nothing remarkable about them.

## **The Sultanate of Tahir Husain in Khorasan**

Mamoon Rasheed Abbasid appointed Tahir bin Husain as the governor in Khorasan in 205 A.H. After that, this dynasty ruled for 50 years in Khorasan. The Tahir dynasty established Khorasan as a separate entity from Baghdad and from that time on they thought themselves independent from Baghdad rule, but the rulers of the Tahir dynasty regarded themselves as subordinate to the Caliph of Baghdad and read his name in the Friday sermons but the Caliph's court did not interfere in the affairs of Khorasan.

## **The Saffar Dynasty in Khorasan and Iran**

In 254 A.H., Yaqub bin Laith Saffar captured Iran and separated it from the Abbasid caliphate. In 259 A.H., he brought under his control

Khorasan as well and put an end to the Tahir government. The Saffar dynasty governed for about 40 years and then the Samania government did away with them. Whatever has been stated about the Tahir and Saffar dynasties in the previous pages is sufficient for our purposes and these two dynasties will not be included in the coming volume.

### **The Samania Dynasty in Mawaraunnahr and Khorasan**

Some things have been said about the Samanis above when the Samani government of Mawaraunnahr took away Khorasan from the Saffaris and Tabristan from the Alawis, its jurisdiction extended from Mawaraunnahr (including the cities of Samarkand and Bukhara) to the gulf of Iran and the Caspian Sea. From that time, Mawaraunnahr was free from the authority of the Abbasid caliphate. The Samani dynasty ruled for 125 years. Their contribution to the development of arts and sciences, culture and civilization is appreciable. Bukhara and Samarkand became centers of the arts and sciences and these cities were the birthplace of scholars of such repute that the world still remembers them. After about half a century, Khorasan, Iran and Tabristan slipped out of the control of the Samani rulers. The Buyid dynasty established their domination over this region and overthrew the Samanis. Turk slaves of this dynasty became dominant and the Buyids' downfall started approaching fast. In 384 A.H., a Turk slave of this dynasty Alptageen captured part of the Samani territory. Between 380 A.H. and 389 A.H., the Turks captured the remainder of the Samani territory and ended the Buyid dynasty. The history of the Samani government is even more interesting because this sultanate helped in the establishment of Alptageen's sultanate and Alptageen's successor was Subaktaggen whose son Mahmood Ghaznavi, remains an interesting and captivating figure for the students of Asian history.

### **The Sultanate of Qaramata in Bahrain**

In 286 A.H., the provinces of Bahrain were separated from the Abbasid caliphate and Qaramata established his own kingdom there. He made the people's lives a hell through his repressive measures. His tyrannies and misdeeds will be recorded in a separate chapter. His rule in Bahrain lasted until 364 A.H. after that other dynasties took

control of Bahrain and a number of independent states began to rule there and in the provinces of that area.

### **The Sultanate of Alawis in Tabristan**

From 250 A.H. to 316 A.H., Zaidi Alawi ruled in Tabristan. The Samanids annihilated them and yet several rivals kept fighting with one another in the region and they helped in the establishment of the Buyid dynasty, which has been discussed in the previous pages.

### **The Province of Sindh**

In 265 A.H., the province of Sindh became independent from the Abbasid caliphate and two independent Muslim kingdoms were established, one having its capital in Multan and the other in Mansoorah. The southern part of Sindh formed part of the sultanate of Mansoorah while the northern part was ruled over the sultanate of Multan. Small states like Tooran, Qasdar, Kaikanan, Makran, and Mushki were established by Arab chiefs who had recognized the authority of the bigger states and paid taxes to them. In this way, the whole of Sindh became independent of the Caliph of Baghdad but his name continued to be read in the Friday sermons there. These states began to grow weaker and in 100-125 years time they were extinct. However, the state of Multan survived until Mahmood Ghaznavi invaded India.

### **The Buyid or Buwayhid Dynasty**

The Buyids or Dailamis reigned in Iran and Iraq from 322 A.H. to 447 A.H., approximately 125 years. Instead of declaring independence from the Caliph's rule, the Buyids dominated the Caliph and captured the province of Iraq and finished the Abbasid caliphate both literally and figuratively. They however, spared the Caliph's name and the caliphate in name.

The blow that was dealt to the dignity and reliability of the Abbasid caliphate by the Buyids has been stated briefly in the previous pages. They imposed themselves on the Caliph and he became their puppet. The Buyids have found mention with the history of the Abbasids and no further details about them are needed in coming pages.



## **The Sultanate of Tuloon in Egypt**


Ibn Tuloon has been mentioned previously. Bani Tuloon ruled on Egypt from 254 A.H. to 292 A.H. Though he was independent and the province of Egypt was virtually separated from the Abbasid caliphate in 254 A.H., in the Friday sermon the name of the Caliph of Baghdad continued to be read in Egypt. Bani Tuloon annexed Syria to their government. Their kingdom in Egypt and Syria claimed to be loyal to the Caliph of Baghdad but they had cut off the court of Baghdad from any involvement in the Egyptian and Syrian governments.

## **The Sultanate of Akhshidiyah in Egypt and Syria**

When the government of Bani Tuloon ended in Egypt and Syria, the Governors of both the provinces began to come from the Caliph's court for sometime and both the provinces appeared to become a part of the Abbasid caliphate again. In 316 A.H., the Caliph of Baghdad, Moqtadir Billah, appointed Muhammad bin Tafaj governor of Ramla. In 318 A.H., he was made the ruler of Damascus followed by Egypt in 323 A.H. Muhammad bin Tafaj belonged to an ancient ruling dynasty of Farghana of Mawaraunnahr. The chiefs of Farghana were then called Akhshid. Muhammad bin Tafaj captured the Egyptian throne and announced his autonomy in 327 A.H. and chose the title Akhshid. In 330 A.H., he conquered Syria and in 331 A.H. annexed the Hijaz to his Kingdom and founded his dynasty. In so doing, he faced no hardship because the Buyids had made the Caliph's court powerless and ineffective. The fear and awe of the Caliph had left the public's hearts. The Akhshid dynasty ruled over these countries until 356 A.H. when the Fatimids conquered Egypt and later Syria.

## **The Sultanate of Obeidi (Fatimids) in Egypt, North Africa and Syria**

In 296 A.H., the Aghlab dynasty ended in North Africa (Tunis) yielding to the Obeidi dynasty. In 356 A.H., the Obeidis took Egypt from a minor of the Akhshid dynasty and made Cairo their capital and constructed the defensive walls of the city. In 381 A.H., the Obeidis captured Aleppo and in a short time, their government

extended from the Moroccan border to Syria. The Obeidis left Qairwan and made Cairo their capital, the islands in the Mediterranean Sea and the western districts could no longer be held under their control but their superiority in the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea was established and the eastern conquests compensated for their western losses. Most of the western territories that they lost went under the Christian's control and they latter took the eastern territories from the Muslims. The advent of the Obeidis in Egypt benefited the Christians and put the Muslims at loss. The Obeidis also claimed the caliphate and took the oath from those under their occupation and they were called Caliph by their subjects. Thus, three lines of the caliphate became established in the world. The foremost and the longest is that which was established by Abu Bakr Siddiq  and ended with the last Caliph of the Ottoman dynasty Sultan Abdul Majeed. The first part is called the rightly guided caliphs, the second the Umayyah dynasty, the third is the Abbasid dynasty, the fourth is the Abbasids of Egypt and the fifth is the Ottoman Empire. We have finished four parts of this long chain. The fifth part will follow. The second separate line of the caliphate began from the period of Abdul Rahman III in Spain and ended with that dynasty. The majority of Islamic scholars have recognized this line of the caliphate as lawful. They regarded the caliphs of Spain as the caliphs of Islam, that is, obedience to them by the Muslims living in their regions was considered obligatory. The third separate line of the caliphate was started by the Obeidis (Fatimids) and has not been recognized as a true line by the scholars of Islam. They recognize them neither as caliphs nor do they regard them as deserving honor. They introduced partnership with Allah and evil innovations, desecrated Islamic worship and committed many kinds of misdeeds. The rule of the Obeidis lasted until 567 A.H. Then Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi ended this dynasty, founded the Ayyubi dynasty and reintroduced the mention of the Abbasid caliphs in the Friday sermons in Egypt.

### **Daulatul Hamdan in Mosul, Jazirah and Syria**

Abul Hija Abdullah bin Hamdan bin Hamdoon bin Harith bin Luqman bin Asad bin Hazam founded an independent state in the provinces of Mosul in 289 A.H. and for about 100 years Banu Hamdan

governed in Jazirah and Syria. They continued the Friday sermon in the name of the Abbasid caliphs in their territories. Prominent rulers among them were Saifuddaulah and Nasiruddaulah who ruled in Syria and Mosul respectively. They had taken the greater parts of Syria from Banu Akhshid and captured Jazirah too. They fought the Buyids that is, the Dailamis, a number of times and they gave them a good fight. Sometimes they got the better of the Caliph, who in that period of course was the puppet of the Buyids or Dailamis. During their regime, the issue of offensive and defensive responsibility against the Romans had nothing to do with the Caliph's court. Banu Hamdan alone invaded the Romans and retaliated against their attacks. Among these, Saifuddaulah led successful wars against the Romans and received much recognition in this respect. Finally, only Syria remained under their control and Hamadan's government went under the control of their slaves who introduced the Obeidis name in the Friday sermon in Syria and ultimately this government met its end in 380 A.H. Banu Aqil bin Kab bin Rabi'ah bin Amir established his rule in Mosul and captured the province of Jazirah. After that, several Arab chiefs established their kingdoms in small territories in these areas. They lived under the auspices of some bigger power in name only and sometimes they declared their independence until the Seljuks captured Baghdad and dominated all of Iraq and then the Seljuks deputed their own governors or established their own direct rule.

### **The Government of Banu Sulaiman in Makkah**

The Caliph of Baghdad used to appoint Governors to Makkah. But in 301 A.H., Muhammad bin Sulaiman who descended from Sulaiman bin Dawood bin Hasan Muthanna bin Hasan bin Ali bin Abi Talib founded an independent government (Muhammad bin Sulaiman should not be confused with Sulaiman bin Dawood's son because between these two Sulaiman's there are probably two or three more). The State lasted until 430 A.H. During these 125 years, there were many fights and battles. Four or five persons of this dynasty ruled in Makkah. It was a strange sort of rule. During the Hajj season, the caravans from Egypt and Baghdad arrived and quarreled over reading the Friday sermon. They attached no importance to the Governor of Makkah. If the Amirul Hajj of Baghdad dominated, he

used to read the names of the Buyids and the Caliph of Baghdad. If the Egyptian Amirul Hajj got the better of the one from Baghdad, he used to read the name of Banu Akhshid in the Friday sermon. When the Obeidis (Fatimids) emerged victorious in Egypt, the Obeidis and the Abbasids would fight over the Friday sermon. When the Qaramata held power, they slew the Hujjaj and looted Makkah and the pilgrims caravans. Sometimes when the Egyptians desecrated the black stone and hurled stones and abuse on it, the Iraqis flew into a rage and started putting them to sword. During the same period, the Qaramata removed the black stone, carried it away to Bahrain and returned it to Makkah only after 20 or more years. In brief, during the Hajj time no trace of any rule of Banu Sulaiman was found in Makkah. They were Zaidi Shias and so they were naturally inclined to the Obeidis but they surrendered to whoever was more powerful.

### **The State of Hashimites in Makkah**

After the Banu Sulaiman, Abu Hashim Muhammad bin Hasan bin Muhammad bin Musa bin Abdullah bin Abi Alkaram bin Musa's descendents began to rule in Makkah. They lived as rulers of Makkah like Banu Sulaiman. They started reading the name of the Caliph of Baghdad in the Friday sermon in the beginning of the Seljuk period. When the Seljuk Sultans became weak near their end the Hashims began to read the names of the Obeidi rulers in the Friday sermon. When Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi wiped out the Obeidi (Fatimid) government in 567 A.H., the Hashims of Makkah became extinct as the Hijaz and Yemen came under Salahuddin's control and the Governors of Makkah were appointed by his dynasty. After some time Banu Qatadah established their rule in Makkah followed by Banu Nami and others until the Ottomans conquered the Hijaz and the Ottoman Sultan began to appoint the rulers of Makkah known as the Sharif of Makkah. Then in times that are more recent, Sharif Husain rebelled against the Ottomans and did great damage to the Islamic government by turning himself into the focus of hatred and humiliation of the entire Islamic world. He recognized the so-called Christian superiority and brought disgrace on the Hashimites.

## **The State of Marwanliya in Dayar Bakr**

Abu Ali bin Marwan was a Kurd. He founded an independent government in Dayar Bakr, which lasted, in his family over 100 years from 380 A.H. to 489 A.H. The cities of Amad, Arzan, Miafareqeen and Kaifah were included in this state. They were loyal to the Obeidis of Egypt and the Obeidis made them the rulers of Halab this bringing them on par with the Hamdanis. They showed allegiance to the Buyid dynasty too. An invasion by the Seljuks put an end to them.

## **The Sultanate of Ghaznaviya in Afghanistan**

It has been stated above that Alptageen had established a separate kingdom by capturing the southern part of the Samani sultanate. Then his son-in-law Subuktageen succeeded him as the ruler. Mahmood Ghaznavi was his son. This dynasty reigned from 351 A.H. to 552 A.H. During Mahmood Ghaznavi's regime, the length, breadth and power of this sultanate reached its zenith. It extended from the Punjab and Multan in India to the western edge of Khorasan and from the Persian Gulf to the river Jeune. He invaded the territory up to Samarkand and Bukhara, he launched offensives against Kalinjer (Bengal) and Somnath on the other side. When this dynasty was in decline, the Khwarizm Shahs captured Khorasan while Afghanistan and Punjab were conquered by the Ghauri dynasty. The Ghaznavi dynasty was always loyal to the Caliph of Baghdad. During the regime of Sultan Mahmood Ghaznavi, the Seljuks came out of their ancestral lands of western China and settled in the plains of Bukhara and gradually they spread up to Asia Minor. Mahmood Ghaznavi had conquered the territories up to Mawaraunnahr.

## **Seljuk Dynasty**

The rule of the Seljuks lasted for about 270 years from 430 A.H. to 700 A.H. Its beginning was very magnificent but at the end it was divided into many parts. From the beginning, they were divided into many sects. Their longest hereditary line was the one that included kings of international repute like Alp Arsalan and Malik Shah Seljuk. They are

called the Seljuk of Iran. A brief account about them has been given above. A detailed account will follow next. Besides them, the Seljuk of Kerman, Seljuk of Iraq, Seljuk of Syria, Seljuk of Rome (modern day Turkey) are also well known. The histories of all these dynasties are not without interest. After these there followed the sultanates of their slaves and the Atabaks (slave teachers or tutors). They also add richness and grandeur to our Islamic history. The Seljuks appeared on the horizon at a time when the repressions of the Dailamis (Buyids) had humiliated and weakened the caliphate in Baghdad. The Islamic government was torn to pieces and they established separate and independent kingdoms as we have read above. The Seljuks restored the lost glory of the Abbasid caliphate unseated many small dynasties from power and rule and resuscitated the Caliph's greatness and dignity in a grand and powerful government. The Seljuks power was based on their military and martial prowess, they let the army chiefs run the country's administration and government. It soon was in disarray and all the Seljuk chiefs vying with each other helped bring back the past anarchy by capturing provinces and states separately and independently. The Seljuks were new converts but they were the embodiment of sincerity and free from the conspiring and intriguing of the Alawis. They had many opportunities to serve the cause of Islam.

They served the cause of religious knowledge and encouraged noble-hearted people as much as they could. They held in greatest esteem the Abbasid caliphs simply because they thought they deserved it in view of the old traditions of Islam. They remained quite unaffected by the rivalries of Abbasids, Umayyads and Alawis. They neither hated one sect nor did they love the other unjustifiably. They were simple, straightforward and true Muslims. They fought the Christians tooth and nail and established the superiority of the Muslims' swords on the hearts of the Christians and pushed back their on rushing flood with authority. It was due to their rule that the government of the Abbasid caliphs survived until the end. The cause of their downfall was the same that brings down every nation, internal dissensions and bickering.

The Seljuks power as has already been stated, was a military one their power was dependent on the army. Its officers were Turk slaves who were brought from the forests of Qaicha and purchased. The Seljuk

Sultans trusted them most. They never doubted their loyalty. When those slaves grew disciplined and became chiefs, they proved to be extremely brave and faithful. The Seljuk Sultans assigned their slave chiefs as tutors to their young princes and the princes learned manners under their tutelage and that was why they called those slave-tutors Atabak. The word Atabak in Turkish language means an Amir who may be taken as the father's deputy. When the Seljuk Sultans became powerless after years of fighting, those slaves or Atabaks found opportunities and established their own governments in different territories. Taftageen, Seljuk Tatash's slave, was appointed tutor to Tatash's minor son Wafaq Seljuk and became the ruler of Tatash's government after Wafaq and began to rule in Damascus. Emaduddin Zangi, Sultan Malik Shah slave's son, founded an Atabak state in Mosul and Aleppo. The Seljuk Sultan of Iraq Masood had a Qaichaqi slave. He established an Atabak sultanate in Azerbaijan. Sultan Malik Shah had a slave named Anustageen among whose descendents were the kings of Khwarizm Shahia. Similarly, there was an Atabak chief name Salfar who founded an Atabak government in Iran. In brief, by the sixth century A.H. all the Seljuk countries were captured and ruled over by Seljuk army chiefs.

### **The Atabaks of Syria and Iran**

Malik Shah's Turk slave was Ak Sanfar who was his Hajib also. He was assigned as the ruler in Syria and Iraq. In 521 A.H., Ak Sanfar's son Emaduddin took over as the Governor of Iraq and the same year he annexed Mosul, Sanfar, Jazirah and Harran to his kingdom. In 522 A.H., he brought into his possession major parts of Syria. Emaduddin waged holy wars against the Romans and endeared himself to the world of Islam. His son Nuruddin Mahmood succeeded him as the ruler of Syria while his second son Saifuddin took Iraq. Nuruddin Mahmood out did his father in launching holy wars against the Romans and achieved even greater fame. After him, his family was torn into several groups. The Ayyubi dynasty was a branch of the same family as the Emaduddin Zangi dynasty, which continued to rule for 125 years.

## **The Atabaks of Arbela (Irbil)**

Among Emaduddin Zangi's Turk officers was one named Zain Ali Kochak bin Buktageen who served as his deputy in Mosul. In 539 A.H., he annexed Sanjar, Harran, Takrait and Irbil (ancient: Arbela) to his kingdom and made Irbil his capital and established an independent government. It continued under his family's rule until 630 A.H. After that, it went directly under the control of the Caliph in Baghdad.

## **The Atabaks of Deyar Bakr**

Artoq bin Aksab Seljuk was an army officer. His son El Ghazi founded his own government in 495 A.H. The government remained with this family in name only until Timur's times. They were loyal to the rulers of Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi.

## **The Atabaks of Armenia**

Qutbuddin Seljuk's slave Salman Qutbi took the city of Khalat from the Marwani kingdom and established his own sultanate in 493 A.H. His descendents continued to rule until 604 A.H. when the Ayyubi sultanate conquered it.

## **The Atabaks of Azerbaijan**

Sultan Masood's Qaichaqi slave Alizkaz established his own government in Azerbaijan that lasted for a hundred years from 531 A.H. to 632 A.H.

## **The Atabaks of Iran**

the chief of a group of Turks was named Saifnar. He joined the supporters of Tughril Baig Seljuk. One of his descendents Sanfar bin Maudood captured Iran in 543 A.H. His family continued to rule in Iran until 686 A.H. A ruler of this dynasty, Atabak Sad, began to pay taxes to Khwarizm Shah. It was after his name that Sheikh Muslehuddin Shirazi chose his title *Sadi* for his famous book. Atabak Abu Bakr succeeded Atabak Sad. He was loyal to Ektai Khan of the



Mongols. It was this Atabak Abu Bakr whom Sadi has referred to in his masterpiece *Gulsitan*.

### **The Atabaks of Laristan (near the Arabian Gulf in Iran)**

The founder of this dynasty was Atabak Tahir who was a chief of the Atabaks of Iran. The year Sanqar bin Maudood captured Iran, Atabak Tahir was sent to conquer Laristan. He captured Laristan and established his rule there in 543 A.H., which lasted until 740 A.H. One of the branches of this dynasty continued to govern in Laristan until the tenth century A.H.

### **The Atabaks of the Khwarizm Shahia**

Anwastageen was a Turk slave of Bulgatageen Ghaznavi who became Malik Shah's water supplier. Malik Shah appointed him as the ruler of Khwarizm (Khiva). Then his son Khwarizm Shah succeeded him. He extended his Kingdom up to the bank of the river Jejune and captured Khorasan and Isfahan. Khwarizm Shah's son Aladdin Muhammad conquered Bukhara and Samarkand in 607 A.H. and then extended their territory to include a major part of Afghanistan up to Ghazneen. Then he became a Shia and decided to uproot and wipe out the Abbasid caliphate. He just had begun his plan when Genghis Khan invaded and threw him into a defensive posture. The Mongols pursued him and he continued to evade them until he died on an island in the Caspian Sea in 617 A.H. He left three sons who continued to evade the Mongols. One of them Jalaluddin Khwarizm fled to India and after living there for two years went back to fight against the Mongols. Ultimately the Mongols destroyed their dynasty in 628 A.H. The Khwarizm Shah's Kingdom began in 470 A.H. and ended in 628 A.H. Their rule was regarded as equal to that of the Seljuks.

### **The State of Ayyublah**

An account of the Atabaks of Syria and Iraq has been given above. One of them Emaduddin Zangi appointed a Kurd chief called Ayyub bin Shadi as governor of the city of Baalbek. Gradually he became an important leader. Ayyub had a younger brother Sherkoh. When Emaduddin died and his son Nuruddin Mahmood Zangi succeeded

him as king, he made Sherkoh the ruler of Hims and Rahba. When he saw his merits and bravery, he made him the supreme commander of his army. When Nuruddin sent Sherkoh to Egypt, he asked his nephew Salahuddin Ayyubi to accompany him to Egypt. This has already been stated. Salahuddin founded his sultanate in 564 A.H. and Egypt, Syria and the Hijaz were quickly annexed to it. The kingdom founded by him is known as the Ayyubi Dynasty. This dynasty continued to rule until 648 A.H. but after Salahuddin it became divided. One of its branches at Hama survived until 742 A.H.

### **The Mamluks of Egypt**

After the Ayyubi Dynasty of Egypt, the country saw the rise of the slave kings in 560 A.H. that has been discussed above. They also had two branches. They were vanquished in 922 A.H. and were replaced by the Ottomans.

While discussing the Seljuk Sultans we have covered a large area of history and have to go back to address several popular and powerful kingdoms, which were established much earlier for which chronological references need to be given. So let us leave the eastern territories like Khorasan, Iraq and Syria and turn our attention to the west.

### **The Kingdom of the Zeria of Tunis**

When the Obeidi (Fatimid) Dynasty shifted its capital from Qairwan to Cairo, the whole of North Africa from Egypt to Morocco was under their jurisdiction at the time. Their naval forces in the Mediterranean Sea were regarded as superior to all but after the shifting of the capital to Cairo, its power did not last long over the western territories. The kingdom of the Zeria was established in Tunis and it ruled from 362 A.H. to 543 A.H.

### **The Samadias of Algeria**

The dynasty of Samadia established their rule in Algeria and they governed from 398 A.H. to 547 A.H. Due to the Obeidi's shifting their capital the Berber tribes in Morocco became independent. They were destroyed by the dynasty of the Mowahids.

## **The Kingdom of the Murabitun**

During the period of the caliphate of Banu Umayyah, some tribes of Yemen came and settled in the lands of the Berbers like Tunis, Algeria and Morocco. By virtue of their teachings, Preachings and the ideal Islamic way of life they converted the Berbers to Islam. One of the tribes that lived in Morocco managed to convert the Berbers that were still unconverted through the sermons of Faqih Abdullah bin Yaseen of the Maltunah tribe in 448 A.H. They wanted to make him their leader but he refused and pointed towards a man named Abu Bakr. The new Muslim Berbers chose Abu Bakr as their leader and began to address him as Amirul Muslimeen. This assemblage attracted the neighboring tribes. There was no stable government in Morocco at the time. There were various tribal territories but none were dominant. During this anarchy, Abu Bakr's power began to rise in stages. He called his men Murabitun the defending army of the Islamic border. Abu Bakr inspired them to serve Islam and motivated them to be very brave. He then moved forward towards eastern Morocco and conquered Sijilmasa and made his cousin Yusuf bin Tashfain its governor. Yusuf bin Tashfain was very religious minded, brave and wise. When Abu Bakr died in 453 A.H., Yusuf bin Tashfain became their leader. He founded the city of Morocco and made it his capital. In 472 A.H., the Christians beleaguered the Muslim leaders of Spain by their attacks and the Muslims of Spain sought help from him. He went to Spain and broke the backbone of the Christians by defeating them in a major battle. He left an army of 3,000 Murabitun in Spain for its defense and returned to Morocco. After four years, the Christians again attacked the Muslims and they begged Yusuf to help them again. He defeated the Christians and annexed the Islamic part of Spain to his government. In short, Spain, Morocco, Tunis, Algeria and Tripoli were included in the Kingdom of the Murabitun. This dynasty paid very little attention to naval power. Their rule lasted until 551 A.H. By virtue of their valiant actions, they rendered the Christians quite powerless and helpless for a century.

## **The Kingdom of the Mowahids**

Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Tumart was from the Berber tribe Masmuda, they inhabited Sous Mountain (part of the High Atlas range in southern Morocco), he was known for his profound knowledge of the Traditions of the Prophet ﷺ, Islamic law, the Arabic language and literature and he had deep interest in the propagation of Islam calling to the good and forbidding evil. He made no discrimination between the rich and the poor in matters of moral instruction and truthfulness. His austerity made him content with simple dress and food. There was a group loyal to him and called him the Mahdi. He enjoyed royal privileges among his followers. Before his death in 522 A.H., he handed the leadership of his group called Mowahhadin to his friend Abdul Momin. Abdul Momin rebelled against the Murabitun and began to conquer territory. Ultimately within the span of two years, he took most of the territory of the Murabitun, caused their downfall and sent an army to Spain. After conquering Spain and Morocco, he called himself Amir al Muminin. Then in 547 A.H., he conquered Algeria and destroyed the Samadia dynasty. After the conquest of Tripoli, his Kingdom extended from the Egyptian border to the Atlantic Ocean including Spain. In 632 A.H., the army of the Mowahids received a great setback at the hands of the Christians and they failed to maintain their rule in Spain. However, the leaders of Granada continued to fight the Christians. After the loss of Spain, the dynasty of the Mowahids showed signs of weakness and decline. Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi took Tripoli from them then followed a declaration of independence by the dynasty of the Hafids who had ruled as the Mowahids deputies in Tunis and soon after that Algeria also followed suit. A number of leaders vied for power in Morocco leading ultimately to the end of this dynasty in 667 A.H. Its place was taken over by the Marinid Dynasty in Morocco.

## **Hafsid Dynasty in Tunis**

The Mowahids had deputized in Tunis a man named Hafs as the ruler on their behalf. His family continued to inherit this post for generations. Finally, it declared its independence in 625 A.H. It ruled honorably for

over three hundred years in Tunis. In 941 A.H., the Ottoman Admiral Khairuddin (Barbarossa) conquered Tunis and annexed it to the Ottoman Empire. This was the end of the Hafside rule.

### **This Kingdom of Zeyaniah of Algeria**

The man who was appointed as Governor by the Mowahids in the province of Algeria, declared his independence in imitation of the Hafside Dynasty in 633 A.H. Their capital was Tlemcen. Their rule lasted until 796 A.H. when the Moroccan Marinid Dynasty captured their country.

### **The Marinid Dynasty of Morocco**

The Marinid Dynasty ruled over the mountainous regions of Morocco from 591 A.H. In 667 A.H., they captured the Mowahid's territory and established their rule over all of Morocco. In 796 A.H., this dynasty was ruined by one of its own branches and in its place two small rival groups of Muslims founded their rule.

In this chapter, a few references to some of the eastern territories are yet to be given, for instance:

### **The Ismaili Assassins**

Imam Jafar Sadiq's son Musa Kazim is considered by all the ten Imams of the Shia sect to be his father's successor and Imam. However, Imam Musa Kazim had a brother Imam Ismail. Those who regard his brother Ismail as Imam are known as Ismailia Shias. The Obeidi (Fatimid) Dynasty was the greatest government of the Ismaili Shias. The Ismailis have always taken recourse to secret plotting and conspiracies in order to achieve their ends. The government of the Obeidis had already set up a secret intelligence department for the sake of propagating their beliefs and thoughts and it was through their missionaries that their message was sent not only to the territories occupied by them but also to other foreign lands. These missionaries lived and spread throughout all the Islamic countries as preachers, spiritual ascetics, traders, and many other guises and

educated the masses about the Ismaili beliefs. Their blasphemous teachings were abominable and extremely dangerous. They held that the Quran was impracticable that Ismail bin Jafar Sadiq was a prophet. According to them, there were seven Imams. They took the founder of the Obeidi Dynasty to be the seventh Imam and believed that obedience of the Obeidi caliphs to be the source of salvation and more. The efforts of these missionaries did much to benefit and popularize the Obeidi government.

Hasan bin Sabah was an inhabitant of Rayy. His lineage has been disputed. Some say he was an Arab by race and that his ancestors had come from Yemen. Some suggest that he was a magian. Regardless, his father and his relatives believed in the Shia way. Hasan bin Sabah was educated at Nishapur. He was the classmate of Omar Khayyam and Nizamul Mulk Toosi, the Prime Minister of Alp Arslan and Malik Shah. He was an extremely intelligent and self respecting man. He reached Egypt during Mustansir Obeidi's regime. He was accorded a great reception there. He lived as a royal guest and companion of Mustansir for over a year in Egypt. After having full acquaintance with the Ismaili faith he took the oath for Mustansir and proved to be a first rate missionary for the Obeidi government. When he parted with Mustansir as a missionary, he said to him. "Whom should I follow after you? Who will be my Imam?" Mustansir said, "My son Nazar will be your Imam after me." That is why the group founded by Hasan bin Sabah is also called Nazaria. After his return from Egypt, he lived for sometime in various cities of Iraq and Iran and began to convert the people to his beliefs. Due to the efforts of the Ismaili missionaries, many of the Shias and non-Shias had already embraced the Ismaili faith. So, Hasan bin Sabah was able to gather many supporters very quickly. Mahdi Alawi was the governor of the province of Isfahan and Qahistan on behalf of Malik Shah. Hasan bin Sabah fraudulently purchased the Qalaa al-Maut (Fort of Death) from Mahdi Alawi in order to construct his prayer house. He fortified it in all respects. He collected his devotees endeared himself to the illiterate and warring tribes of the neighboring regions, founded his kingdom and came to be known as Sheikhu'l Jabal. He invented some strange faiths and practices and

inculcated them into the people's minds. He prepared a group of dedicated fighters who wrought wonders. He remained in his Maui Fort and had great Kings, ministers and scholars murdered by his fighters. He made his famous missionary Kaiyya Buzarg Ummeed his heir-apparent and successor whose descendants continued to rule for several generations. Finally, Hulegu Khan exterminated this group in 655 A.H. The government founded by Hasan bin Sabah lasted in Qahistan for about 175 years from 483 A.H. to 655 A.H. This Ismaili government had established its superiority all over the world and great emperors feared these warrior assassins for they always attacked their adversaries suddenly and by deceit and when they found their victim alone.

### **The Crusades against Syria**

The European Christians began attacking the Muslims in 490 A.H. The Christian missionaries had enthused and instigated their people against the European Muslims and called for the liberation of Syria from Muslim occupation. They regarded this as an act of great religious service and a source of salvation. The chain of these attacks continued for over 300 years. All the Christian kings of Europe geared up to march to Syria along with the Christian invaders and to use their united power. All these invasions form an interesting chapter of the history of Islam and they will be narrated together. The part of these crusades dealing with Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi's confrontations with the Christians is extremely important and interesting.

### **The Mongol Kingdom of Asia**

In the beginning of the seventh century A.H., the Mongols or Tartars from the northern mountains of China and under Genghis Khan's command moved towards the west and made the countries of Turkistan, Mawaraunnahr, Khorasan, Azerbaijan, Isfahan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Asia Minor, Russia and Austria the target of their looting, killing and plundering. They ruined hundreds of kingdoms and put to death dynasties. In the middle of the seventh century in 656 A.H. Hulegu Khan looted Baghdad and killed its last Abbasid Caliph Motasim Billah, which has already been mentioned. Following

Genghis Khan's death in 624 A.H., the Mongol empire was divided into several parts. A part of Genghis Khan's descendents ruled over China. It established its rule in Turkistan and Mawaraunnahr. Another part established its Kingdom in Khorasan and Iran yet another part came to rule over the area of the Caspian Sea. The Mongol empire, which was established by Hulegu Khan in Iran and Khorasan, deserves our special attention. In a very short time, most of the Mongol Empire turned into Islamic territories, that is, the Mongols embraced Islam and became the servants of Islam. After 175 or 200 years, the Mongol Empire in Asia began to decline and ultimately it became extinct. In its place were formed many small states in Iran, Khorasan, Iraq and Mawaraunnahr.

In this state of decline of the Mongol powers in 800 A.H. a chief called Timur (Tamerlane) appeared. By virtue of his victories, he created an uproar all over the Asian continent and repeated the history of Genghis Khan's conquests. Timur was a Muslim but he also used killing and plundering as part of his warfare. They were far more civilized and disciplined compared to Genghis Khan. Timur's descendents succeeded in becoming rulers of all the same territories in which Genghis Khan's descendents had ruled. And just as Genghis Khan's descendents saw their downfall, similarly and with the same rate Timur's descendents met their end. The Mongols of Timur ruled for approximately the same period of time as the Mongols of Genghis Khan. When Timur's dynasty ended in Iran and Turkistan a man named Babar was born from among Timur's descendents. He founded a very powerful empire in India and Afghanistan, which lasted for a significant period of time.

## **The Ottoman Empire of Turkey**

A reference to the Oguz Turks has already been given above. The Seljuks had pushed most of the tribes of the Oguz Turks back to the provinces of Armenia and the coast of the Caspian Sea. Among them was one, which has the credit of founding the Ottoman Empire. When the Seljuk Sultan's rule was over and the Mongols began to create havoc, there were 10 to 12 small states in that part of Asia Minor,



which were under Muslim occupation. Seljuk princes or the Seljuk's slaves governed those states. One of these states located near the border of Armenia, was under the control of Sulaiman Khan, the chief of a tribe of the Oguz Turks. When the Mongols invaded Alauddin Kaiqbad Seljuk's state, Sulaiman and his son Artughril accompanied by their native Turks helped Alauddin Kaiqbad. Their attack was perfectly timed and that forced the Mongols to retreat and flee. Alauddin Kaiqbad honored Sulaiman with a royal robe and made him the commander in chief of his army and awarded a large feudal estate to his son Artughril near the city of Ankara. Alauddin Kaiqbad's capital was the city of Konya at the time. Artughril's feudal estate was located at the border of the Roman emperor's territory. After his father's death, Artughril extended the frontiers of his territory. He secured some territory from the sultan of Konya as a reward and some he took from the Christians. In this way, he came to establish a good-sized state. The Mongols did not disturb these small rulers in Asia Minor and left them alone. In 641 A.H., gheyathuddin Kaikhusru the Successor Alauddin Kaiqbad of had to pay tax to the Mongols. In 657 A.H., Artughril died and he was succeeded by his son Uthman (Turkish Usman) at the age of thirty. The Sultan of Konya, Gheyathuddin Kaikhusro, married his daughter to Usman and appointed him the commander in chief of his army too. When Gheyathuddin Kaikhusro was killed in 699 A.H., all the Seljuk Turks put Usman on the throne of Konya and so besides his own state, the territory of Konya came under his control also. He called himself Sultan. This is the sultan after whose name the Ottoman Empire is known. The Ottoman Sultans were soon able to capture Asia-Minor and drive out the Romans. In 663 A.H., the Ottoman sultans conquered Adrianople and made it their capital and established an Islamic government in southeast Europe by capturing the province of Trabzon. The Roman emperor made peace with him and this saved the rest of his empire from the Ottoman powers. Then the Ottoman's started giving the Christians one defeat after another and continued to extend their frontiers. Finally, in 792 A.H., the Christian kings of Austria, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Hungary jointly launched a very big offensive against the Ottomans. Sultan Murad with a small army

confronted this huge Christian army at Kosovo and gave them a crushing defeat that shook and shocked the whole of Europe. In 799 A.H. the whole of Europe including the French and German armies stood up to root out the Ottoman Empire. The confrontation with Sultan Bayazid, Sultan Murad's son, took place at Nicopolis. Sultan Bayazid, known as Bayazid Yaldram, scored an important victory over the united European forces. Over 20 Christian rulers and dignitaries were brought as captives to the court of Bayazid, who were either kings or princes. This defeat sent a wave of fear all over Christendom. The vanquished Christian kings went back to their countries and made extensive publicity for the formation of a crusade. Then these Christians with even more religious enthusiasm and fervor collected and prepared to fight a decisive war with Bayazid Yaldram. Bayazid Yaldram defeated them in this battle also and was thus able to force the whole of Europe to obey him. At that time, the Roman emperor was in terror. He did not lag behind in sending reinforcements to the Christian crusaders secretly. So, Bayazid Yaldram decided to punish the Roman emperor and finish Christian rule from the Balkan Peninsula and then finish the Christians forever by conquering the entire European continent. He was still thinking of attacking when news came from the Asian continent that Timur with a huge army had invaded Bayazid Yaldram's Asian territories. He was forced to turn to Asia Minor and face Timur. In 814 A.H., the battle took place at Ankara, which resulted in a victory for Timur and Bayazid Yaldram's capture thus the European continent escaped from being over run by the Muslims. It then appeared as if the Ottoman Empire was going to end but after a few years, it was restored to the power and glory seen during Bayazid Yaldram's regime. Within 50 years, Muhammad II conquered Constantinople and put an end to Christian rule in the Balkan Peninsula. Then Sultan Salim gave a crushing defeat to the Iranians, conquered Egypt, Iraq, and Arabia and established the Islamic caliphate in 922 A.H. by finishing the Abbasid caliphate and introduced the chain of Islamic caliphate into the Ottoman dynasty as has been mentioned above. The history of this dynasty is highly interesting as well as instructive for the Muslims.

## **The Turks of Kashghar**

The Turk tribes inhabiting the eastern part of Farghana, which had converted to Islam, established independent kingdoms that lasted from 320 A.H. to 560 A.H. One of their rulers called Elak Khan ruled in Turkistan. His capital city was Kashghar. He belonged to the Oguz Turks and the Ottoman Turks were their countrymen. When the Seljuk Turks established their kingdom, these tribes went to Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Seljuk Turks also were originally from the same nation. These wandering tribes established their kingdoms around the Caspian Sea and those, which were pushed to the east, founded their governments in Turkistan with their capital in Kashghar.

## **The Kings of India**

The Indian state of Sindh was annexed to the Islamic caliphate in the first century A.H. The Governors of Sindh continued to be appointed by the Caliph's court many years. When the Abbasid caliphate began to weaken there sprang up several independent Islamic states. Slowly and gradually, the areas of those Islamic states began shrinking. One of these states in Sindh existed until the invasion of Mahmood Ghaznavi. He attacked Punjab and Multan and annexed them to his Islamic government. And when the Ghauris succeeded the Ghaznavis, they conquered the whole of northern India and established a powerful Islamic state. The first Muslim king who came to the throne of India was Qutbuddin Iqbal who was a slave of Shababuddin Ghauri. The Khilji dynasty followed the slave dynasty and then came the Tughlaqs. The Tughlaq dynasty was followed by Khizr Khan's dynasty. Then the Lodhis became the rulers followed by the Moghals. But Sher Shah expelled them and founded his own Kingdom. The Moghals recaptured India from the Sher Shah dynasty and established their own empire. Then the English entered India. The Muslim dynasty referred to above was established in Delhi and Agra. Other contemporary Muslim Kings ruled in different provinces of India for example the Bahmani dynasty, Kings of Gujrat, Kings of Jonepur, the Kings of Bengal and the Kings of Malwa. The account of these with details could be seen in history of India.

## **The Sultanate of Jalairiah of Iraq**

When the Mongol Empire collapsed, the Mongol chiefs established their separate kingdoms in various places including the Jalair dynasty, which ruled in Iraq from 736 A.H. to 814 A.H. Their capital was Baghdad. The founder of this ruling dynasty was Sheikh Hasan Buzurg Jalair. His son Owais succeeded him as the ruler in 757 A.H. after his death. He took Azerbaijan and Tabriz from the Turkmen in 759 A.H. and included Mosul and Deyar Bakr into his Kingdom. When he died in 784 A.H., Kurdistan was given to his son Bayazid and Iraq and Azerbaijan went under the control of his next son Sultan Ahmad Jalair. In 796 A. H., Timur conquered Jalair's entire territory and Ahmad Jalair fled to Egypt. He lived there as a refugee with the Mamluks for several years and when Timur returned to Samarkand, Ahmad Jalair came back and recaptured his old territory. In 813 A.H., Yusuf Turkmen killed Ahmad Jalair in the battle. His nephew Shah Wald came to the throne of Baghdad. At last, in 814 A.H., this dynasty was completely destroyed by the Kara Koylunlu Turkmen.

## **The Kingdom of Mozaffar**

There was a great leader Mozaffar Khorasani at the court of the Moghal Kings. In 713 A.H., the Moghal King Abu Sayeed made his son Mobarzuddin the Governor of Iran. In 715 A.H., Kerman was also annexed to Iran. Thus after bringing Iran and Kerman under his control he declared his independence. This dynasty continued to rule until 759 A.H. The renowned poet Hafiz Shirazi enjoyed an important position at the court of King Shuja of this dynasty.

## **The Kara Koylunlu Turkmen of Azerbaijan**

This dynasty like that of the Jalair had the chieftainship of the Mongol armies. This dynasty established its rule in the southern lands of Azerbaijan and continued to rule from 780 A.H. to 874 A.H. From this tribe, Yusuf Turkmen was very famous. Ak Koylunlu Turkmen took

their power away from them. Kara Koylunlu means 'black sheep'. They had the picture of a black sheep on their flags so they were called Kara Koylunlu. Similarly, Ak Koylunlu means a white sheep and they had the picture of a white sheep on their flags and so they were known as Ak Koylunlu.

### **The Ak Koylunlu Dynasty**

The Ak Koylunlu Turkmen established their state in the vicinity of Deyar Bakr in 780 A.H. They expelled the Kara Koylunlu Turkmen from Azerbaijan in 784 A.H. and established their rule over all of Azerbaijan and Deyar Bakr. But in 907 A.H., Shah Ismail Safwi ended their rule and captured all their territories.

### **The Kingdom of Safwi**

When Timur was victorious in Ankara in 814 A.H., his army captured many Turks. Later on, he took these captives to Sheikh Saifuddin Ardbeli. The Sheikh claimed to have descended from Iman Musa Kazim but he was a Sunni by faith. Once when Timur expressed his readiness to do anything for him in exchange for some service the Sheikh asked him to release all the Turk captives. He obeyed and released all of them. After freeing them, he took the oath for the Sheikh and began to live with him. Timur left Ardbil but the Sheikh found himself surrounded by a huge crowd of dedicated servants who showed their loyalty to the Sheikh's descendents for generations until they made one of his descendents Ismail Safwi their King. Ismail Safwi was a Shia by faith. In 903 A.H., he conquered a few cities in Iran and then in stages he succeeded in bringing under his control the entire country. In 920 A.H., Sultan Salim I gave him a shocking defeat at the battle of Chaldiran, a place 20 miles away from Tabriz. He annexed some western provinces of the Safwi government and then turned to Syria and Egypt. Ismail Safwi lived for 10 years more after this defeat and his descendents continued to rule in Iran until Nadir Shah Irani exterminated this dynasty in 1148 A.H. and established his own rule. Then Iran and Afghanistan went under the rule of the Pathans. Then Iran went under the rule of the Qajar Dynasty.

### **A Bird's-eye View**

The perusal of the above-mentioned list of ruling dynasties and Islamic governments marks the end of this second volume. This should enable the readers to form a picture of the Islamic dynasties and states and they would be able to understand where each dynasty ruled and when they ruled. After this brief summary, one can easily form an idea of the detailed conditions and the lifespan of these dynasties up to the end of the Abbasid caliphate. This volume should help the readers in understanding these dynasties, which will be covered in the following third volume.

**THE END**

**[Second VOLUME]**

# The History of **ISLAM**

Volume Three



By: **Akbar Shah Najeebabadi**

Revised by: **Safi-ur-Rahman Mubarakpuri**

# **The History of Islam**

**(Volume Three)**

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## **Publishers Note**

We are presenting before you the third volume of the book *History of Islam*. This book was originally written in the Urdu language in 1922 (1343 AH) by Akbar Shah Khan Najeebabadi. This was the time about 25 years before the partition of Indian Subcontinent into Pakistan and India. For the purpose of brevity, the compiler has presented the authentic events in concise form from the famous histories of Islam written in the Arabic and Persian languages by the great Muslim historians like Tabari, Ibn Athir, Mas'udi, Abul-Fida', Ibn Khaldûn and Suyuti, apart from getting benefited from the authentic books of *Ahadith* for the compilation of the part about the biography of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. So, this compilation is actually the extract of the works of the famous Muslim historians.

In the first volume, starting with the introduction of the history as a subject, the country, people and conditions of Arabia prior to the advent of Islam were discussed, and an account of the life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was presented including the hardships and opposition he faced while propagating the message of Islam, and the details of migration and the period after it until his death. After that the description of Rightly Guided Caliphate was also discussed in its full perspective.

In this second volume, starting with the Caliphate of Banu Umayyah, the martydom of Imam Husain ؑ, and the Caliphate of the Abbasids, all areas have been covered as far as the expansion of Islam was.

This third volume begins with the description of the conditions of Spain before and after the rule of Muslims and the role played by Umayyad, Abbasid, Almoravid and Almohad Caliphs there and their encounters with the Christian Armies. Then some mention of the conquest of Morocco and North Africa has been given along with the details of Idrisia and Aghlaba's rule there. After that detailed accounts of Ganghisid Mongols, Turks and Tartar Mangols have been produced. After that Islamic history of Persia is described giving the accounts of Saffariah, Samanid, Delmid, Gharnavid, Seljuk, Ghourid and Muluk Dynasties with the periods of Khwarizm Shah, Atabeks and Sistan Kings rule there. Then the Islamic history of Egypt and Syria is covered describing the Ubaidullah, Ayyubid and Mamluk Dynasties, and the rule of Atabek and Abbasid Caliphs. In the end, something about the Ottoman Dynasty and its Empire is discussed including the description of the conquest of Constantinople.

We hope that the readers will find this volume also of great help in the study of Islamic history. The famous scholar Safi-ur-Rahman Mubarakpuri has revised the Urdu edition before its translation to check the authenticity aspect.

The translation was done by the Translation Department of Darussalam, and every care has been taken to reproduce the events and the names of the persons and places as accurately as possible. We thank all the persons who have cooperated with us to complete this task and produce it before you into a presentable form. May Allâh accept our humble efforts in this regard and send His peace and blessings on our Prophet Muhammad, his Companions and his followers.—*Amin!*

Abdul Malik Mujahid  
General Manager  
Darussalam

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## Chapter 1

# **Spain before the Muslims**

### **Geographical Conditions**

On the map of Europe is a peninsula in the southwest, which joins Europe with the African continent. The southern part of this peninsula, by joining the northern part of Morocco, intended to form an isthmus but the Mediterranean Sea prevailed in joining hands with the Atlantic Ocean, with the result that Europe and Africa remained about ten miles apart from one another. The Mediterranean Sea and the Bay of Biscay were making an attempt to form an island but the Pyrenees mountain range, by raising its high wall, separated this peninsula from France without allowing it to become an island. This southwestern peninsula of Europe came to be called Spain, Iberia, Hispania and Andalus (Andulus). It covers an area of about two hundred thousand square miles.

### **Produce and Climate**

Its climate is temperate and better than all the other countries of Europe. It has a fertile land and may be compared to Syria and Egypt with respect to agricultural production. It is famous for silver mines and other precious minerals.

Two big rivers, Ebro River (Tagus) in the northeast and that of the Guadalquivir (Wadi Al-Kabir) River in the southwest, flow to make this peninsula a bed of flowers. This peninsula is enclosed in the north by the Bay of Biscay and the Pyrenees, in the east by the Mediterranean Sea, in the south by the Mediterranean, Gibraltar (Jabal Tariq) and the Atlantic Ocean, and in the west by the Atlantic Ocean.

### **Details of Provinces and Territories**

The details of the noted provinces and territories of this peninsula are as follows: Portugal falls in the west, Galicia in the northwest, the provinces of Asturia, Castile, Arburia, Aragon in the north, the provinces of Catalonia in the northeast, and Andalusia in the southeast. Toledo lies at the center of Spain while the famous cities of Cordova and Granada fall in the province of Andalusia, in the southern part of the peninsula. Seville was also famous in the southwestern part. The most fertile and valuable area of the peninsula falls in the southern part, Andalusia and this part of the peninsula remained under the Muslim control for a longer period than the other provinces.

### **Phoenician, Carthage, Roman, Gothic Rules in Spain**

#### **Phoenician Rule**

Phoenicia or Canaan was a country that was the western part of Sham and forms part of the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea (including present day Syria, Lebanon and Israel). Several hundred years before Musa (Moses) a very powerful trading people lived in this country and historians call them Phoenicians. Phoenician ships would carry merchandise throughout the Mediterranean Sea. Vast wealth let them lay the foundation of a unique society and civilization and by capturing Palestine and establishing a Red Sea port, they established relations with India and China. Through the Mediterranean Sea and crossing Gibraltar, they spread their trade routes to England. The northern and southern ports of the Mediterranean Sea were under their control and they had the mightiest Navy in the world. They set up colonies at various places. Among those colonies was Carthage (Tunis) a city of northern Africa, which was later made the capital of an independent state.

Cities, towns and ports were established by them on the coastal areas of Spain. Gradually, the Phoenicians began to rule there and Spain became a province of their state. At the decline of Phoenician rule, some of their members set up a mighty empire in Carthage (Tunis). They ruled for hundreds of years. They were worshippers of fire and stars. Their civilization had no parallel in their times. The Carthaginians rule of Spain left a deeper effect than the Phoenicians because they were nearer to Spain than Syria.

### **Roman Rule in Spain**

When the Roman Empire was founded in Italy confrontations took place between the Romans and the Carthaginians. After victory over the Carthaginians, the Romans set up their rule in Spain. They ruled over Spain for five hundred years. Viceroy's were sent to Spain from Rome who collected annual tribute from the country and sent it to the ruling parties of the Roman Empire.

### **Goth Rule**

With the acceptance of Christianity the Roman Empire suffered a two-fold calamity. One, the Goths, resembling the Mongols, rose from middle and eastern Europe and started launching attacks on Rome. The pleasure loving Romans could not withstand the onslaught of the hard-working Goths. During the same time, the Roman Empire was divided into two parts. One had Rome as its capital and the eastern Roman Empire made Constantinople its capital. These Gothic plunderers later accepted Christianity in the same manner as the Seljuk Turks accepted Islam adopting the religion of those they conquered. Just as the Seljuks had, after accepting Islam, founded their rule so, after accepting Christianity the Goths crossed the Pyrenees captured Spain and established their rule.

Like the eastern and western Roman Empires, the Goths also founded two separate states named Eastern Goth and Western Goth. Since the western Goths became rulers and adopted religion simultaneously, they kept themselves independent of the Roman Pope. Moreover, their acceptance of Christianity was more a matter of expediency than faith. But the power and influence of the spiritual leaders cast its

effects on Spain too with the spread of Christianity in other countries of Europe. With the passage of time, the bishops gained so much power that they had their say in the election and enthronement of kings and it was not easy for a king to curtail their power. The Goth dynasty, which took its shape by 500 C.E., ruled over Spain for two hundred years.

During this period, the fighting qualities and ferocity of the Spanish Goths were changed into a life of luxury, pleasure and adornment. Even though the Goths had brought with them soldierly qualities and a fighting spirit they changed their outlook and way of life. Since the Goths had no character or high standard of living of their own, they crossed all limits by indulging in the pleasures of life under the influence of the Spaniards. In Short, Spain was the sum total of many civilizations. But it was not bereft of academic and other kinds of developments of the age. Christianity had also influenced it deeply by its growth and practices.

The Gothic dynasty ended after 700 C.E. and an eastern nation raised the standard of Islam in Spain by ending the rule of Persia, Rome, Syria, Egypt and Greece and by replacing Christianity and idolatry.

### **End of Gothic Rule**

A religious sense grew within the Gothic state with the passage of time. It had a church of its own. The laws of the country were dictated by Christian narrow-mindedness, with the result that the Jews were put to disgrace and the Christian population treated them like their slaves. Their properties were confiscated and they had to serve the Christians in all manners. Concerning their rights, they had few and were reduced to the state of animals. The Spanish Christians were dominated by all kinds of superstitions. In respect to culture, the arts, science, trade and discipline the Jews were superior to the Christians who were generally pleasure loving and lazy while the Jews were hardworking. However, the Jews were a small minority and they could not fight for their salvation. The bishops went so deep into the State's affairs that the kings could not go against them. They had large estates and fertile lands. Their residences were made to look like wonderlands and their assemblies were resplendent with pleasures

and luxuries and whatever they desired. No one had the courage to interfere with their evil acts. The verdicts and decrees issued by the bishops made the most respectable of people bow down. Each of the bishops possessed one or two hundred slaves and an injunction issued by a bishop had no appeal to any higher body whatsoever. Gothic rule had its capital in Toledo. The Archbishop of Spain lived in the capital. The Archbishop enjoyed so much power that he could order the deposition of a king. In other words, the Christian clerics were the total rulers of Spain.

### **Accession of Roderick (Larziq)**

With regard to grandeur and magnificence the expanse of Gothic rule had reached its peak. They had under their sway most of the islands around the Mediterranean besides the Spanish peninsula. Some of the parts of the northern coast of Africa were also under their control. On the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, Byzantium/nas (Eastern Romans) ruled gloriously. When the Muslims had driven away the Romans from Syria and Palestine, the Goth king Witiza ruled in Toledo. When he noticed the bishops rising in power and their inhuman treatment to the Jews, he made an attempt to cut them down to size. Being informed of the plan, they accused the king of favoring the Jews and brought about his deposition. They replaced him with Roderick, a military commander, who belonged to the royal family. This was the end of Gothic rule and beginning of Roderick's rule. He was a seasoned commander of 70 or 80 years of age. On assuming the throne, he ruled with power and peace and did nothing to antagonize the Church.

### **Factors Leading to the Muslim Invasion of Spain**

The Ceuta fort on the northern coast of Africa (Morocco) was still under Christian possession and a man named Count Julian was the garrison commander. He was a Roman commander and was deputed on behalf of the Caesar of Constantinople. Except for this fort, all other occupied territories of Africa had come under Muslim control. Julian had established friendly relations with the Christian rulers of Spain with the consent of Caesar of Constantinople. Since Spain was nearer

to Ceuta, it was expedient from the standpoint of security. The last Gothic king, Witiza had married his daughter to Julian. The deposition of Witiza and the enthronement of Roderick displeased him but the support of the bishops kept Julian silent. Julian had a daughter named Florenda who was the maternal grand daughter of king Witiza. As per the practice of that time, young sons of kings, governors, commanders and men of high status were sent to live in the king's palace to learn etiquette and manners. The king treated them like a father and sent them to their parents after attaining puberty. Similarly, they would send their daughters to the queens with the same purpose in view. Florenda, the daughter of Julian, when she became a young lady, was raped by Roderick. Informed of this, Julian grew furious and whoever among the Goths heard of this felt annoyed. However, Count Julian kept his displeasure a secret and arrived in Toledo. He met king Roderick and pretended that his wife was seriously ill and wanted to see her daughter, Florenda before her death. Roderick could not oppose her departure. Thus, Julian took his daughter and came back to Ceuta. The Archbishop of Seville came to Julian to share his pain and both of them sat together to find out how to do away with Roderick's rule.

### **Musa bin Nusayr**

Musa bin Nusayr was then the governor of the occupied western territories in Qairwan during the Caliphate of Waleed bin Abdul Malik. Tariq bin Zeyad, a slave of the Berber race was the Governor of Tanja city (Tangiers) and Commander of the Moroccan force on behalf of Musa bin Nusayr. Although Tariq was close to Julian the latter preferred to talk with Musa bin Nusayr. He took the Archbishop and a selected band of the Christians and reached Qairwan. Musa bin Nusayr showed him the utmost respect. They requested Musa bin Nusayr to invade Spain. But the Muslim Governor gave no clear reply. Thereupon the Archbishop said that Spain was under tyrannical rule and it was his (Musa's) duty to save the Spanish population from these excesses. Musa bin Nusayr then made inquiries about the military power and other conditions in Spain and then wrote to Caliph Waleed bin Abdul Malik in Damascus seeking his permission for the task ahead.



### **First Islamic Corps to Spain Under Turaif**

Musa bin Nusayr then ordered five hundred soldiers under Turaif to accompany Julian in his ships and land on the coast of Spain to acquire first hand knowledge about the state of affairs there. Turaif landed on the Spanish coast and returned safely after making some small-scale raids for plunder. After a short time the Caliph permitted them to invade Spain but with the utmost caution.

### **Tariq bin Zeyad Ordered to Invade Spain**

Acquainted with the state of affairs in Spain Musa bin Nusayr sent orders to Tariq bin Zeyad, the Governor of Tangiers to invade Spain. Tariq led a force of seven thousand in four boats. He was still on the way when he was overtaken by drowsiness and saw in dream that the Prophet (ﷺ) gave him the good news of the conquest of Spain at his hands. Shortly after this, his eyes opened and he was sure of his victory.

## Chapter 2

# **Islamic Rule In Spain**

### **The Strange Order of Tariq**

Tariq landed on the coast of Spain along with his men and his first order was to set the boats on fire and sink them. This was undoubtedly strange but in fact, it was an act of matchless bravery. As a seasoned military commander, he knew that compared with the huge enemy force he had with him a very small one. His soldiers might lose heart or a discouraging situation might lead them to retreat or wait for reinforcements before engaging the enemy. By sinking the warships, he let his forces know that retreat was out of the question. They were standing between their enemy and the sea. They were left with no choice but to go ahead and push their enemy back. They needed courage, determination and quick action because lack of courage and fighting spirit would lead them to annihilation.

### **The First Stage of the Islamic Force**

The place Tariq landed on was called Lines Rock but from that day on it came to be called Jabal Tariq or Gibraltar.

## **The Attack of a Christian General and His Defeat**

Tadmir, the military Commander of Roderick was very experienced and had led his force to victory in a number of encounters. He was encamped in the vicinity of Tariq's forces with a strong army. He launched a powerful attack before the Muslim forces had a chance to get settled. However, Tariq gave him a smashing defeat and he fled from the battlefield. He then wrote to Roderick the following day from a safe place:

"O Emperor! Some strange people have invaded our territory. We fought with courage and bravery but tasted defeat and our troops could not withstand their onslaught. What is needed is your personal engagement. I am quite unaware of their identity and whereabouts".

## **Preparations of Roderick**

Soon after receiving the horrible news Roderick set about building his army. He came from Toledo to Cordova where troops from all parts of the country began to concentrate. He then marched against the invaders at the head of one hundred thousand troops. Tadmir also joined him with his force, while all the seasoned commanders of Spain came forward to play important roles. But Tariq did not sit idle during this period. He continued his march occupying cities and towns and reached up to the Lorca valley.

## **The First Battle**

The two forces clashed on the bank of a small river near Janda Lagoon adjoining Sidonia city on 28 Ramadan 92 A.H. (July 711 C.E.). Shortly after the departure of the Muslim forces under Tariq, Musa bin Nusayr dispatched five thousand soldiers as reinforcements, which joined Tariq before the confrontation. Now the twelve thousand men of Tariq bin Zeyad had to face a strong Christian force of one hundred thousand. The Muslim force knew little of the state of affairs of the country they had invaded. The Christian troops were the natives of the country and had come to the battlefield to save their motherland.

Tariq bin Zeyad, the Governor of Africa was the freed slave of Musa bin Nusayr who did not command extraordinary value. The Emperor of Spain was himself leading the army and all the resources of the country were at his command. The Muslim force had its greater part based on convert Berbers while the Christian force was inspired and encouraged by eminent bishops and religious guides. Had Tariq's force been defeated in this battle it would have been known as one of the insignificant events of history. But since twelve thousand Muslim troops defeated one hundred thousand well-equipped Christian troops, it came to be known as one of the most glorious battles ever fought by humans. While drawing his battle line Tariq made a fervid speech to the Muslim fighters, which fired them with new spirit, zeal and determination.

The greater part of Christian force consisted of cavalry clad in armor, while the Muslim side had only foot soldiers. The cavalry movement of the Christians was quite terrifying and it appeared very clear that they would crush the Muslim troops under their hooves without giving them an opportunity to take up their arms against the Christians. But the glittering Islamic swords dispelled the hovering clouds of the Christian force and left many lying dead and wounded. Their *takbir* (*Allah-o-Akbar* Allah is Great) rent the air and subdued all other shouts and noises on the battlefield.

## Roderick's Escape from the Battlefield

Roderick fled the battlefield leaving behind not only a large number soldiers dead and wounded but also his wide experience, courage and determination.

## Causes of the Christians' Defeat

The Christians tasted defeat not because of their lack of courage but simply because of the daring deeds of Muslim fighters. Had they been cowards they would not have left behind great commanders, princes and bishops dead and wounded. The actual number of dead Christian soldiers is not known but history tells us that the horses left by the dead horsemen were sufficient for the entire Muslim army. The Christian soldiers could have escaped on horseback but they preferred to die fighting.

The Muslims were crowned with this victory on 5 Shawwal 92 A.H. (711 C.E.). This was the beginning of Muslim rule in Spain. Tariq bin Zeyad sent the good news of the Muslim victory to Musa bin Nusayr the same day and he himself marched ahead to win the province of Andalusia. Musa bin Nusayr grew happy and dispatched the glad tidings to the Caliph. He then left Qairwan for Spain at the head of eighteen thousand soldiers. Before his march, he sent orders to Tariq not to go ahead but consolidate his position in the conquered territories. However, Tariq had conquered Andalusia before the letter reached him. But some big cities of the Peninsula and its capital, Toledo still held military camps of the Christians and a joint attack was possible at anytime. Thus, his march to the north and the conquest of these cities was necessary to Zeyad who assembled his Commanders and read out the order issued by Musa bin Nusayr. They were all unanimous against the order pleading that if the campaign against the Christians were stopped at the present stage the Christians would with attacks on all sides, make the task of the conquest of the entire Spain most difficult. Count Julian also supported this view.

### **Tariq's March to Cordova**

The Governor of Cordova belonged to the royal family. The fugitives of the battle of Lorca valley had taken refuge in the city. The fort of the city was very strong and formidable. Tariq first asked them to yield in a friendly manner but on their refusal, he besieged the fort. He then appointed Mughith, the Roman, to continue the siege and he proceeded to Toledo.

### **Conquest of Toledo**

Tariq conquered Toledo rather easily in Rabia al-Thani 93 A.H. From the royal treasury of Toledo he captured twenty-five crowns of former Gothic kings. Every crown bore the name and tenure of the king. Every king had a new crown to wear and it was preserved in the royal treasury after his death. Tariq then marched to the remotest northern province of Spain. Mughith, the Roman, in the meantime, conquered Cordova and its surroundings. Thus, Tariq brought under his control the Spanish peninsula from the south to the north. But the eastern and western parts were yet to be conquered.

## **Musa bin Nusayr In Spain**

Meanwhile, Musa bin Nusayr stepped into Spain along with his force. Count Julian, who was put by Zeyad there to look after the administration, gave a hearty welcome to Musa. Finding Musa angry with Tariq for overstepping his orders, Julian advised Musa to lead his campaign against the cities of the western provinces. Musa accepted the advice. Tariq joined him in Toledo. Musa not only reprimanded Tariq for disobeying his orders but also held him as a captive for a short time. After a few days, Musa sent Tariq in front at the head of a large army and proceeded at his back. While Tariq and Musa were engaged in conquering the northern and northwestern cities Abdul Aziz, the son of Musa started conquering the southern and southeastern territories. Tadmīr, the commander of king Roderick, was then in the southeast. He came out to face Abdul Aziz. A number of battles took place. Tadmīr retreated to the hills for safety and took to guerrilla attacks. At last, a peace accord was signed between the two on condition that Tadmīr would give no shelter to the enemies of Islamic rule and religious freedom would be kept intact. On the finalization of the agreement, Abdul Aziz gave a small territory to Tadmīr to rule over. Musa and Tariq also signed peace treaties with each city on easy terms including religious freedom for the Christians, disputes between the Jews and the Christians to be settled according to their religious scriptures, no interference on anyone accepting Islam, and safety for the Christians and their property. Musa and Tariq had also directed their troops not to kill old men, women and children except those who rose in arms to fight against the Muslims.

Conquering northern and western provinces Tariq and Musa marched up to the Pyrenees and then stepped into the southern territories of France and conquered them. But the Islamic force came back to the Pyrenees owing to the severity of the winter and shortage of supplies. He had a plan to conquer France, Austria, Italy, and the Balkans before arriving at Constantinople.

## **Full Islamic Control over Spain**

Following his arrival in Spain and before his departure from Toledo, the capital towards the north Musa bin Nusayr sent Mughith, the Roman to

Damascus with valuable gifts and news of the conquest of Spain. Mughith came back from the headquarters of the Caliph after Musa had conquered Galicia province. However, the order of the Caliph issued to Musa bin Nusayr and brought back by Mughith was rather frustrating.

### **Musa Summoned**

The Caliph ordered Musa to meet him in the court of the Caliph and in pursuance of the order Musa bin Nusayr deputed his son Abdul Aziz in Spain and left for the headquarters in the company of Mughith and Tariq. He took with him the treasure of Spain, golden utensils, ornaments and one-fifth of the total possessions captured along with a large number of slaves and slave-girls. He reached Damascus at a time when Caliph Waleed bin Abdul Malik was on his deathbed. His brother Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik was about to succeed him. When Sulaiman heard of Musa's arrival near Damascus he sent him (Musa) word not to make a hasty entrance into Damascus. But Musa paid no heed to the message of Sulaiman and appeared before Caliph Waleed bin Abdul Malik. On receiving such large and costly gifts from Musa bin Nusayr, Waleed became very happy. But the courtiers and ministers felt jealous.

### **Accession of Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik**

Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik succeeded his brother Waleed bin Abdul Malik on Jamad al-Thani 96 A.H. Following the death of the latter immediately after coming to the throne Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik called Musa bin Nusayr to account in a severe manner and when Musa failed to clear the account received as tribute from the western countries he confiscated Musa's wealth and property. He put him in prison for failure to pay two hundred thousand gold coins he owed to the State.

### **End of Tariq**

With the punishment given to Musa bin Nusayr, Tariq bin Zeyad also could not remain unaffected. He was neither shown any respect nor sent back to assume charge of Spain or Morocco. All the conquered territories in the west were under the control of Musa's sons. Spain was ruled over by Abdul Aziz bin Musa, Qairwan by Abdullah bin Musa and Morocco by Marwan bin Musa. Since Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik could not ignore their being at the helm, he held back Tariq who

was considered as a member of Musa's family. He was allowed to be retired on pension and to settle in a city of Syria. On intercession, Musa bin Nusayr was released and sent to live in al-Qura valley after paying as much money as he could.

### **Death of Musa bin Nusayr**

In a state of frustration Musa bin Nusayr passed away the next year 97 A.H. Historians have targeted Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik for his unkind treatment of Musa bin Nusayr. But he could not be blamed for what he did. Umar Farooq had already done the same in the case of Khalid bin Waleed and had him deposed from his command. Musa bin Nusayr remained in power for about sixteen or seventeen years and owed a lot of wealth to the public treasury. Had the case been overlooked it would have set a very bad example for other Governors, present and future.

Moreover, Sulaiman's ministers, advisers and courtiers never made him the target of their criticism for his treatment of Musa and Tariq nor have Muslim historians ever condemned him for his behavior.

European historians have very wrongly stated that Roderick suffered defeat owing to his weak power. Some others say rather baselessly that Roderick's subjects had revolted against him and went over to the Muslims side. Although the Spanish population had begun to look upon the Muslim character and style with respect, except for Count Julian and a bishop who had asked the Muslim ruler to invade Spain, no one lent any support to the Muslims. Moreover, the Muslims in the presence of their power of Faith and strength of heart were not in need of any intrigue or plots or outside help.

### **A False Episode**

European historians have, in fact, fabricated many such stories to degrade the achievements of the Muslim forces. One of these says that when Tariq proceeded to the north from Toledo he met a group of fugitives who had a table or low wooden seat of Sulaiman (ؓ) studded with gems and jewels and valued in the millions and Tariq wrested it from them. When Musa reached Spain he demanded the table, Tariq handed over the captured table after removing a leg of it and concealing it, he told Musa that he had received it in the same



state. Musa bin Nusayr fitted a golden leg onto it but it looked different from the others. Presenting the table to the Caliph, Musa bin Nusayr submitted that he had found it in the spoils of war. Finding a leg different from others the Caliph inquired about it and Musa submitted that he had received the table from the Christians in the same state. Tariq then took out the fourth leg from under his clothes and said to the Caliph, "This is the fourth leg of the table". When the Caliph came to know that Musa had taken the credit for the deed performed by Tariq he grew very angry and put Musa bin Nusayr in prison along with such a heavy fine that he would not be able to pay. European historians have invented many such stories with ulterior motives. One cannot, however, find a reason for Tariq to play such a heinous trick on his leader and immediate commanding officer, Musa bin Nusayr. Moreover, how could Musa have remained in the dark for so long although thousands of men were aware of such a plot. It means an ambitious and far-sighted conqueror like Musa bin Nusayr was so mean that he would snatch the credit from his freed slave, Tariq. Furthermore, nobody could in the packed court notice the hidden leg of the table. Among the historians of Spain and western countries, Ibn Khaldun is the most reliable and he has made no mention of such an event. According to Ibn Khaldun, the Caliph grew angry with Musa because the latter had resolved to conquer all of Europe by putting the Muslims into danger and it was for this reason he was called to headquarters.

As already mentioned, Musa bin Nusayr had entrusted Spain, Morocco and the other occupied territories to his sons. Thus, it was out of question that the Caliph would have taken Musa to task so severely over the leg of a table. It also seems strange that the Caliph made no attempt to depose his sons when he was so angry with their father. Even when, after sometime, he sent Muhammad bin Yazid as governor to look after the western countries, he left Abdul Aziz bin Musa to rule in Spain.

### **First Ruler of Spain**

Although Musa and Tariq were the conquerors of Spain and they spent a long time conquering and making peace with the Christian powers, the person to be called the first ruler of Spain was Abdul Aziz, the son of Musa bin Nusayr.

## Chapter 3

# **Rulers of Spain**

### **Abdul Aziz bin Musa**

With the departure of Musa bin Nusayr from Spain most of the cities rose in revolt. Abdul Aziz bin Musa had to put down the revolts with determination and a heavy hand. Since the commanding officers in the different cities were not sufficient in number, the Christian population felt encouraged to take up arms. But very soon, it dawned upon them that it was not an easy task to drive away the Muslims from Spain. Moreover, they had the feeling that Islamic rule was far better than the Gothic rule and a blessing from Allah Almighty.

### **Religious Freedom**

The Muslims were the first to announce religious freedom. The Christian population also enjoyed it fully provided they would live in peace with the Muslims. The Christians of Spain had a large number of slaves who worked very hard. When Abdul Aziz announced that the slaves accepting Islam would enjoy full freedom from slavery, large number of slaves under the Christians embraced Islam and became free from slavery. This

was not only a great service to humanity but also a device to increase the Muslim population.

Abdul Aziz had married Ajilona, the widow of Roderick and left her to follow her religion. The Muslim population also followed suit. They occupied the vacant Christian houses and began to live with them. Abdul Aziz appointed Christians as the administrators of cities and towns. Ajilona very soon began to influence her husband in state affairs. Although the Arabian Commanders disliked it, they could not do anything about it.

The new Caliph, Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik had accused Musa bin Nusayr of the case of non-payment of the spoils of war instead of holding him in honor for his conquests. Abdul Aziz had not uttered a word against the Caliph but Ajilona and other Christians began to take advantage of Abdul Aziz's agitated feelings. He also tried to win the support of Ajilona and the Christians to free Spain from the control of the Caliph. But in order to keep Caliph Sulaiman unaware Abdul Aziz sent a substantial amount along with gifts to Damascus. The correspondents of Caliph had already informed him of the dangerous designs of Abdul Aziz and those who carried spoils of war and gifts from Spain also supported the report.

### **Assassination of Abdul Aziz**

The Caliph sent orders to five Muslim Commanders in Spain to kill Abdul Aziz if his evil intentions became dangerous. Abdul Aziz had his capital in Seville. When the Caliph's message came to Habib bin Ubaidah, he consulted the other four persons. Now all the five decided to kill Abdul Aziz. Thus, they arrested Abdul Aziz and assassinated him. Burying his body in Seville, they sent his head to the Caliph. Following this they replaced him by Musa bin Nusayr's sister's son Ayub bin Habib Lakumi. Since the Caliph was not sure of the killing of Abdul Aziz, he had not sent anybody from Damascus to replace him and left the decision to them. Thus, the appointment of a close relative of Abdul Aziz as a ruler of Spain proves the good intentions of the group of five because they could have taken the leadership from his family. European historians have exaggerated on this subject in order to defame Caliph Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik's character.

Abdul Aziz bin Musa was assassinated in 98 A.H.

### **Ayyub bin Habib**

After doing away with Abdul Aziz the "group of five" convened a meeting of the courtiers and commanders and obtained their consent for Ayyub bin Habib. However, he was elected on condition that his election was to be considered valid subject to the approval of either the governor or the Caliph otherwise it would be set aside forthwith.

### **Transfer of the Headquarters**

With an eye on the large Christian and Jewish population and their growing influence Ayyub bin Habib shifted his capital to Cordova. It was a historic deed of the new ruler because Cordova, from then on, became the center of world attention. Ayyub also invited Berber and Arab tribes of Africa and Morocco to settle in Spain. Thus with the substantial increase in the Muslim population the possibilities of Christian insurgence was minimized to a certain extent. A number of forts were built on the frontiers and were manned by garrisons. Besides, Ayyub made an extensive tour of the country and managed to fulfill the needs of the different areas. Ayyub ruled for only for six months when a deposition order came. Muhammad bin Yazid of Qairwan feared his growing power and influence particularly because he belonged to the family of Musa and Abdul Aziz. He sent Harb bin Abdur Rahman bin Uthman to assume the post of governor. The Caliph latter sent his approval.

### **Harb bin Abdur Rahman Ghafqi**

Shortly after coming to power Harb bin Abdur Rahman began to make the officials of Musa and Abdul Aziz's time the target of his excesses. He indulged in taking violent action against the Christians and the Jews. They had enjoyed kind treatment from the Muslim rulers in the past. At last, they sent a deputation to Qairwan to seek Harb's transfer from Spain. But Muhammad bin Yazid paid no heed. Following their failure they took the daring step of sending a deputation to Damascus. It took place when Caliph Umar bin Abdul Aziz had taken charge after Caliph Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik. When

the deputation approached the new Caliph, he took the immediate step of deposing Harb bin Abdur Rahman and replaced him with Samh bin Malik Khulani. Harb ruled in Spain for two years and eight months.

### **Samh bin Malik**

Even though Samh bin Malik was a military man and was also among the companions of Tariq bin Zeyad, he worked hard to promote justice and prosperity among the people. His rule was, in fact, the reflection of Umar bin Abdul Aziz's noble caliphate.

### **Census In Spain**

Caliph Umar bin Abdul Aziz ordered a census in Spain to know the exact number of tribes and sections of people in the country. Samh then populated the Berbers in the deserted areas and induced them to take to agriculture and crafts, which they did with success. He then drew a geographical map of Spain delineating the population of every city and town, its physical position, distance between cities, rivers, mountains and other important details. The map was sent to the Caliph. Rules and regulations regarding trade and commerce, agriculture, *jiz'yah* (poll tax) *ash'r* (one-tenth), *khum's* (one-fifth) and tribute were enacted. Besides, he built a number of mosques and bridges in various cities. Peace and justice prevailed over all of Spain. Samh achieved the same position among the Muslim Governors in Spain that Umar bin Abdul Aziz had among the Muslim umayyad Caliphs.

### **Expedition to Southern France**

In view of Samh bin Malik's earlier style of governance nobody could expect that he would also be a great warrior. After finishing his task of consolidating and regulating his administration, he led his forces into southern France. This part of France had some strong states. The most belligerent to the Muslims was ruled by the fugitive Goths from Spain who had fled with as much possessions as they could carry with them. They were the worst enemy of the Muslims and their state was supposed to be strong and formidable. The Gauls ruled another State,

their capital was in Toulouse. Crossing the Pyrenees Governor Samh invaded and captured Narbonne city and then the whole State. They also captured substantial spoils of war. His next target was Toulouse. After a fierce battle, the Muslim troops laid siege to the city. When Toulouse city was about to fall, the Duke of Acton, a Christian ruler appeared with a large force. Governor Samh had already much fewer troops, some of whom had been left in Narbonne. However, Samh drew the battle line dauntlessly and made an impassioned speech to his force. Thus, the scene of the battle between Tariq and Roderick was repeated.

### **Martyrdom of Samh**

At a time when the Muslims were pushing the Christians back, an arrow hit the throat of Samh and he succumbed to it. Although the Muslim force felt discouraged, they did not give in. They elected Abdur Rahman bin Abdullah Ghafqi as their leader and commander who drew back with enough caution to deny the Christians any opportunity to chase them.

### **Abdur Rahman bin Abdullah Ghafqi**

Historians have generally admired the courage and caution with which Abdur Rahman bin Abdullah Ghafqi pulled out his force safely from the battleground. While coming back from Toulouse to Narbonne, the Muslim forces could have been plundered on the way. But whenever and wherever the Christians made such attempts, they suffered a disaster. Having arrived in Narbonne Abdur Rahman Ghafqi set about bringing back courage, strength and normalcy to the Muslim force. He then marched against those who had shown signs of revolt owing to the Muslim setback in Toulouse.

### **Abdur Rahman's Deposition**

While marching to France Governor Samh had deputed Anbasa bin Suhaim Kalbi to look after the administration. He had also dispatched reinforcements from Spain but Abdur Rahman had already finished his task. On his return from the battlefield, he (Abdur Rahman) was left to work as Governor. But in a short time, Abdur Rahman was deposed on charges of concentrating power in the hands of the army

and the administration was once again handed over to Anbasa bin Suhaim Kalbi. Abdur Rahman paid allegiance to Anbasa without delay. Later, Anbasa appointed Abdur Rahman the Governor of eastern Spain where he had held the same post in the past.

### **Anbasa bin Sahim Kalbi**

Upon taking charge of the Governorship Anbasa began many activities beneficial to everyone. During the early days of his rule, a Christian named Pelayo revolted in the mountainous areas and brought many Christians to his fold. Islamic force put down their insurgence with heavy hands and Pelayo, along with thirty men, escaped to the hills. The Muslims ignored their escape. They later took to robbery and plundering in the nearby areas. With scattered groups of Christians joining them, they gained strength and gradually laid the foundation for a parallel rule in Spain.

### **Conquest of Southern France**

After managing the affairs of his country, Governor Anbasa invaded France. Since Narbonne was under Muslim rule, he experienced no difficulty in passing through the Pyrenees. He conquered Southern France and spread his troops towards the east and the west from the center. At one point, the Christian forces gave a good account of themselves but they could not withstand the heavy onslaught of the brave Muslims.

### **Martyrdom of Anbasa**

The conquest was heading towards the final stage when Anbasa left his troops behind and stormed into the enemy ranks and was honored with martyrdom. Urwah bin Abdullah Fihri replaced him as the commander who was able to retreat safely and brought back his forces to Spain. This event took place in 107 A.H.

### **Urwah bin Abdullah Fihri**

Urwah bin Abdullah was one of the renowned Commanders of Spain. People belonging to his family and tribe lived in Spain in large numbers. He was very honest, brave and sober. However, some

people became angry with him and complained to the governor of Africa about him and he was replaced by Yahya bin Salma.

### **Yahya bin Salma**

Yahya bin Salma Kalbi came to power at the end of 107 A.H. He was an extremist and unyielding by nature, with the result the people of Spain turned against him and he was deposed and replaced by Uthman bin Abi Ubaidah Lakhmi.

### **Uthman bin Abi Ubaidah Lakhmi**

Uthman was appointed Governor by Ubaid bin Abdur Rahman, the ruler of Africa. Five months after his appointment he was replaced by Hudaifah bin al-Ahwas Qaisi.

### **Hudaifah bin al-Ahwas Qaisi**

Hudaifah ruled Spain until the end of 110 A.H. But was deposed and replaced by Haitham bin Ubaid the next year.

### **Haitham bin Ubaid**

Haitham bin Ubaid Kilabi belonged to the Syrian race and was inclined to harsh treatment and hard decisions, because of this the people of Spain turned against him. The Muslims and the Christians united in standing against him. Thus, a deputation left Spain to lodge a complaint to the Governor of Africa about Haitham as they had done in the past. The African ruler paid no heed to the complaint nor did he depose the ruler of Spain.

Meeting with failure the deputation approached the Caliph in Damascus. He sent Muhammad bin Abdullah Ashjai to investigate the matter in disguise. In the case Haitham was proved a wrong doer he was to be deposed instantly and the Governorship was to be assumed by Ashjai, otherwise Haitham was to be left in his place.

### **Deposition of Haitham**

Haitham bin Ubaid waged Jihad on Marshah (La Mancha), conquered it and stayed there ten months. After a rule of two years, he was deposed.



## **Muhammad bin Abdullah Ashjai**

Muhammad bin Abdullah Ashjai came to Spain, looked into the charges and found Haitham guilty. The investigator then assembled the people and placed before them the order of the Caliph. With the active support of the people, he deposed and arrested Haitham and sent him to the Caliph in chains. Muhammad bin Abdullah Ashjai then devoted all his time and energy to put the administration right. After being satisfied with the state of affairs in Spain, he made Abdur Rahman bin Abdullah Ghafqi governor in Spain and left for Damascus. This event took place in 113 A.H.

## **Abdur Rahman bin Abdullah Ghafqi Reinstated**

assuming charge of the administration, he made an all-out effort to put it back to normal. As a part of his welfare works, he built madrasas (schools), mosques and bridges in most of the cities and towns. Finding time from working on the welfare projects, he set about making preparations to invade France.

## **Uthman Lakhmi rebels**

As mentioned above, Uthman Lakhmi had also ruled Spain for a short period of five months. On being deposed, he was given a northern province to rule. The Pyrenees was in his province. Since he was reduced to the position of a ruler of a small piece of land, he felt indignant and agitated and was restless to form his own sovereign rule. Since Uthman belonged to the Berbers, he had little sympathy with Arabs and Syrians. He rather considered them his rivals. The Duke of Acton, the Gothic king, ruled over a large part of France. Following the battle of Toulouse, he wanted to strengthen his position against Charles Martel, the king of the northern part of France. In order to overpower his rival the Duke extended a hand of friendship towards Uthman. With a strong desire to win Uthman's friendship, he not only sent costly gifts but also gave him his daughter, famous for beauty, in marriage. In return for this marriage, the Duke of Acton made Uthman put in writing that he would not force his daughter to abandon Christianity and also refrain from using force against him (the Duke).

## **Uthman assassinated**

When Abdur Rahman Ghafqi, the Governor of Spain decided to lead his campaign against France and pass through the Pyrenees he sent Uthman word to be ready to join his command with military forces and supplies. He showed his unwillingness to obey these orders. And when Abdur Rahman Ghafqi reached there, Uthman put up resistance to Ghafqi's forces in the pass of the Pyrenees. Abdur Rahman Ghafqi sent a commander ahead with some troops who fought Uthman and killed him. His Christian wife was captured and brought before Abdur Rahman.

Finishing his task in the Pyrenees Abdur Rahman Ghafqi entered France and set about conquering city after city. The Duke of Acton had already joined hands with Charles Martel under compulsion and came to the latter along with his forces and encouraged him to face the Muslims. Charles swung into action and began to make large scale preparations for all out war. The Bishops began to arouse Christian feelings against the Muslims. The Islamic forces landed across the river Jourdanne. The Christians were completely routed and the Muslim troops seized the city of Poitiers.

## **Fighting in the City of Tours**

Muslim forces proceeded to the city of Tours, which lies in central France. Both forces remained encamped in front of one another for seven days. The Muslims were strange to the territory while the Christians were trying to save their country and were led by seasoned commanders like Charles Martel and the Duke of Acton. They had gone mad with anger and zeal. The Muslim force, one-tenth of the Christian troops, faced its enemy with exemplary courage. The two forces clashed on the eighth day and a fierce fight broke out which went on until evening. Taking advantage of the dark night the Duke of Acton made an ambush with his forces. The next day, at a time when the Christian forces were about to leave the battlefield the Duke attacked the Muslim force from behind. The front row of the Muslim forces was engaged with the invaders while the Christians who were retreating halted.

## **Martyrdom of Abdur Rahman**

The sudden and unexpected two-pronged Christian attack tore apart the Muslim ranks. In such a state of confusion, Abdur Rahman Ghafqi, following the practice of his predecessors, drew his sword and plunged into the enemy ranks killing them in large numbers. At last, he was honored with martyrdom. The Muslim forces kept fighting the whole day despite the loss of their Commander. However, they retreated in the night. The next morning the Christians did not find the Muslims on the battlefield but they could not muster enough courage to chase them for fear of their having set an ambush. They left the battlefield in a hurry to avoid a sudden Muslim onslaught. The Christians left large numbers of troops dead and the biggest tragedy on the Muslim side was the loss of their Commander. The event took place in 114 A.H.

## **Abdul Malik bin Fihri**

When the Governor of Africa, Ubaid bin Abdur Rahman came to know of the outcome of this battle and the martyrdom of Abdur Rahman Ghafqi he appointed Abdul Malik bin Qatn as Governor of Spain. He ordered him to avenge the martyrdom of Abdur Rahman Ghafqi on the French. Abdul Malik bin Qatn Fihri took charge of the Spanish administration in 115 A.H. and soon after streamlining the administration of the country, he set about making military preparations against France.

Abdul Malik bin Qatn being experienced and bright, encouraged high hopes of future successes. However, he made the blunder of leading his force against France during the rainy season, with the result that the swollen rivers and streams made his way very difficult. In view of the troubles faced by the Muslim force, Christian guerillas began to snipe at them. At last, Abdul Malik decided to withdraw but only after much loss of life and time.

## **Abdul Malik's Deposition**

The African Governor was angry and replaced him by Utbah bin Hajjaj Saluli.

## **Utbah bin Hajjaj Salull**

Utbah bin Hajjaj took charge of the Spanish administration in 117 A.H. and appointed Abdul Malik bin Qatn Fihri as Governor of a small territory. It was a mistake committed by the new Governor. Instead of bringing him down in position, he should have sent him back to Africa.

### **Deeds of Utbah**

He was very intelligent and just. He first brought about peace in Spain. He set up separate police departments to make the routes safe for travelers. He recruited horsemen to patrol all the streets and lanes. He also set up separate courts in every village to lighten the burden of the central courts. He opened at least one madrasa (school) in every village and settlement and set aside a portion of the total revenue to run these institutions. Wherever required he built mosques with a madrasa attached to each one. The Berber population in Spain had increased and their acts of barbarity had increased in the same proportion. Utbah engaged them in constructive jobs in a manner that they became disciplined and civilized. He brought down the rates on revenues and tax collection to a level that made all classes of society happy and satisfied.

He then turned to the French territories under Muslim control. He strengthened and fortified the occupied cities and territories, built forts and during this period, he defeated all French attacks.

The Berbers rose in revolt in Africa in 121 A.H. The African Governor called Utbah from Spain to tackle the situation and he punished the rebels adequately. But disorder and anarchy prevailed throughout Spain during his absence. It proved a heyday for conspirators and those with vested interests. Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman was then the Junior Commissioned officer of the territory north of the Pyrenees with the city of Narbonne as its capital. The Duke of Marseilles, the ruler of eastern France sought help from him against Charles Martel and offered his allegiance to Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman. Charles Martel attacked Marseilles, the capital of the Duke and reduced it to ashes. But he had to withdraw unsuccessfully from Narbonne.

## **Death of Utbah**

When Utbah returned to Spain from Africa, he found clear signs of insurgence. Abdul Malik bin Qatn, the man once deposed by him, had already brought under his control a large section of the Spanish people and staked his claim to the Governorship of Spain. Utbah was planning to deal with the new developments when he was overtaken by death in Cordova in 123 A.H. Thus Abdul Malik bin Qatn captured Spain rather easily.

## **Abdul Malik bin Qatn**

Abdul Malik bin Qatn Fihri was an old man of hundred years, but he was very active with a sound mind and youthful courage. He was originally an inhabitant of Madinah and had taken part in many battles fought in Madinah, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco and Spain. His body showed scars of hundreds of wounds. The Arabs looked down upon the Berbers of Africa and Morocco. The Berbers felt it deeply. When they found the Umayyads, the Arabs, showing signs of national superiority and arrogance they abhorred it. This is the reason why they joined every movement against the Arab rulers.

## **Kulthum bin Ayaz**

A Syrian Commander, Kulthum bin Ayaz was sent by the Caliph to replace Ubaid bin Abdur Rahman, the Governor of Africa. The Berber Chief Maisarah was at that time plundering and creating trouble for the people. Kulthum took some rather reckless steps to put down the Berber uprisings. The Berbers had, on the other hand, made much progress and development with the blessings of Islam. They had become very experienced fighting side by side with the Arab soldiers, and they brought about setbacks for the Syrians.

## **Kulthum bin Ayaz at the Fort of Ceuta**

Leaving a large number of soldiers dead on the battlefield Kulthum bin Ayaz took refuge in the Fort of Ceuta along with ten thousand Syrian soldiers. This fort was situated on the southern coast of the

**Gibraltar Straits.** Even though it was beyond the power of the Berbers to conquer the fort, food grain ran short and the besieged Syrians had to face starvation. Kulthum bin Ayaz sought the supply of food grains from Abdul Malik bin Qatn, the Governor of Spain but he gave no such help for his dislike for the Syrians. When a merchant of Spain, Zaid bin Amr came to know of the wretched plight of the besieged Syrian force in the Ceuta Fort, he dispatched several ships loaded with food grains. When it came to the knowledge of Abdul Malik, he killed Zaid bin Amr in disgrace.

### **Hanzala Appointed as Governor**

When Hisham bin Abdul Malik the Caliph of Damascus came to know of the sad plight of Syrian force he sent Hanzala at the head of a large army. He defeated the Berbers and freed the Syrians. During the same period, Kulthum bin Ayaz passed away and Hanzala became the Governor of Africa.

### **Abdul Malik bin Qatn killed**

With the news of Berbers' large-scale killings the Berbers of Spain rose as one man and attacked Abdul Malik bin Qatn and defeated him more than once. When he found putting down of Berber insurgence beyond his power, he wrote to Balj bin Bishr bin Ayaz Qushairi, the nephew of Kulthum bin Ayaz and Commander of a ten thousand man Syrian force to come to Spain and bring the situation under control. Balj bin Bishr put down the revolt in a short time. When the Syrian force narrated to the Spanish Arabs about their starvation and sufferings and the cruelties of Abdul Malik bin Qatn in the Ceuta Fort, Balj bin Bishr arrested Abdul Malik bin Qatn with the support of the people of Spain. Even though he wanted to keep Abdul Malik in captivity, his companions and the enemies of Abdul Malik forced him to kill the old man of 100. The event took place during the last days of 123 A.H.

### **Mutual Discord**

Shortly after the control of Balj bin Bishr over Spain, Umayyah bin Abdul Malik and Qatn bin Abdul Malik, the two sons of Abdul Malik bin Qatn Fihri started making secret plans against Balj bin Bishr. Yusuf

bin Abdur Rahman the Governor of Narbonne also joined them, with the result that even the Berbers, previously opposed to Abdul Malik, joined the camp of Abdul Malik's sons. Together they marched on Cordova. Balj bin Bishr also came out to face the attack. Thus two strong Muslim forces came face to face in central Spain, Balj was seriously injured and fell from his horse unconscious. However, the Syrians drove away their enemies. Balj succumbed to his injuries. This event took place in 124 A.H. He ruled Spain for eleven months. The Syrians and the Spanish Arabs jointly made Thalba bin Salamah the ruler of Spain.

### **Thalba bin Salamah**

Thalba bin Salamah, being a Yemenite, excessively favored the people of Yemen. The sons of Abdul Malik Qatn, who had escaped following their defeat, refrained from offering their allegiance to Thalba bin Salamah and went about looting and plundering all over the country. The Arab tribes, on the other hand, rose against Thalba because of his excessive favor to the Yemenites and his hostility to the other Arabs. At last, they lodged a complaint to African Governor Hanzala bin Safwan about Ibn Salamah with the request of sending a new Governor.

### **Deposition of Ibn Salamah**

Abul Khattab Hosam bin Darar Kalbi was sent to Spain and was warmly welcomed by the people. He deposed Ibn Salamah and took charge of the administration. The event took place in 125 A.H.

### **Abul Khattab Hosam bin Darar Kalbi**

Abul Khattab deserved to be ruler by all accounts. The people of Spain were fed up with the fighting and the discord that had become an everyday experience. Almost all of them greeted the new ruler outside of Cordova with great fanfare and displayed their total submission. The sons of Abdul Malik also came and offered their allegiance. Hosam started his rule with the utmost justice, tolerance, love and generosity. He looked into the real causes of the disturbances and managed to settle each tribe in a separate territory. In this way, he very wisely spread the Syrians to distant places who had been creating troubles of all kinds.

## **Political Mistake of Abul Khattab**

The only political blunder Abul Khattab made was his excessive favor of the Yemenites. A strong undercurrent of dissatisfaction set in against him. Tribe after tribe began to express themselves against him. In the meantime, a dispute arose between his cousin and an Arab from the Canaan. The case came to the court of the ruler who gave his verdict in favor of his cousin despite his being in error. Displeased and dissatisfied with the court judgment the victim lodged a complaint with Bakr Damil bin Hatim bin Shimr Dhil Joshan, the chief of the Qais tribe about the ruler. Damil bin Hatim was very powerful and popular among the Arabs. He came to the ruler and protested against his improper attitude. After a hot exchange of words, the ruler asked his men to turn the chief out of the court. While pushing him out of the court, they struck a few blows at his neck so that his turban hung to one side of his head. When he came out of the court in a state of utter disgrace, someone asked him to put his turban right. He replied that, if willing, his people would set it right. On reaching home, he called the chieftains of his tribe and other influential Arabs and related to them what had happened. All of them promised to extend their help to him.

Damil bin Hatim then went on tour around the country and met influential people everywhere to give an account of the disgraceful treatment meted out to him. Since almost all of them were displeased with Abul Khattab, they lent their support to him. When he became satisfied that the people of Spain were against the ruler, he set up his center in the city of Sidonia and called his friends and men belonging to his tribe to come together. When they were concentrated at his headquarters he marched on Cordova. Thalba bin Salamah, a Yemenite and the former Governor of Spain also joined Damil bin Hatim. As a result of the clash between the two forces, Abul Khattab was defeated and arrested and sent to one of the strong forts of Cordova as a captive. Following this both Thalba and Damil occupied Spain. The event took place in 127 A.H. However, shortly after that he was released with the efforts of Abdur Rahman bin Hasan Kalbi. On



being released, Abul Khattab left Cordova and met his people to win their support. Thus, a large number of Yemenites gathered round him. Darnil and Thalba also rose to face him. It all happened at a time when the caliphate of Damascus was the target of the Abbasids' intrigue and the caliphate was passing through a state of chaos and disorder. The Umayyad Caliph Marwan was desperately seeking a decisive defeat of his enemies.

There was no one to look towards Spain as the seat of power itself was in danger. Abul Khattab remained as a captive in Spain between 127 A.H. and 129 A.H. and was then put to death. In 128 A.H., Thalba bin Salamah went to Abdul Rahman bin Habib, the ruler of Africa. With the news of Abul Khattab's assassination, the Governor of Africa sent Thalba bin Salamah as the Governor of Spain in 199 A.H.

### **Thalba bin Salamah**

Thalba bin Salamah took the reins of power in Rajab, 129 A.H. and Darnil bin Hatim, being his close friend, took over as the Chief Minister and Commander. Since Thalba too was a Yemenite, Darnil bin Hatim brought peace between the Yemenite and other tribes. Thalba bin Salamah died a few days after. The people of Spain chose Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman Fihri as their ruler. As his abilities and services were known to everyone, there wasn't any objection raised.

### **Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman Fihri**

Since Spain was no longer attached to the center of the caliphate and was inhabited by Muslims of many different tribes internal conflict began to build up and powerful men were aggrieved at the election of Yusuf. The Christians of the territory incited Abdur Rahman bin Alqama, the ruler of Arbonia to revolt but he was killed before he could take up arms. He was replaced by Ibn al-Waleed, who conquered Seville and proceeded to Cordova where Yusuf defeated and killed him.

### **Spain is divided into Provinces**

Having put down the revolts Yusuf turned to streamlining the internal administration. The entire Spain was divided into four provinces and

the French territory under Muslim control was made the fifth one. Names of the provinces are given below:

No.	Name of the province	Famous cities of the province
1.	Andalusia	Cordova, Carmona, Seville, Sidonia, Malaga, Ilbira, Jaen
2.	Toledo	Ubeda, Boeza, Marbella, Villena, Valencia
3.	Merida (Galicia)	Merida, Lisbon, Badajoz, Salamanca
4.	Saragossa	Saragossa, Tarragona, Barcelona, Lerida
5.	Arbonia (Catalonia)	Narbonne, Toulouse, Pampalona, Lugo

### **Impact of Change in Central Rule over Spain**

Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman Fihri did not belong to any group. But when the news of the end of Umayyad caliphate and the establishment of Abbasid rule spread, Syrians everywhere began to face troubles because of the Abbasids. Damil bin Hatim was also surrounded but the people of the Qais tribe saved him. The entire country was torn by strife. Among the supporters of the Umayyad Abu Uthman Ubaidullah bin Uthman and Abdullah bin Khalid were two of the main supporters who were also related. Abu Uthman was the father-in-law of Abdullah bin Khalid. Together they ruled in Ilbira, the city of Andalusia. The city was dominated by Syrians. Yusuf bin Bakht and Husain bin Malik Kalbi were two famous chiefs. On refusal of help to Damil bin Hatim by Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman it was Abu Uthman and Abdullah bin Khalid who extended their help. Badr, the slave of Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil joined before they had left. They persuaded Damil bin Hatim to invite Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil to Spain. Damil favored the proposal, apparently because he did not want to embitter his relations with Yusuf. Abu Uthman and Abdullah bin Khalid then took leave from Damil and came to Ilbira and began

to spread their point of view secretly among the people. Later they came to know that Damil bin Hatim was not sticking to his promise and liked the rule of Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman. Now losing hope of support from the Qais and Fihir tribes, Abu Uthman filled the Yemenites with the zeal of opposition, with the result that the Yemenite Commanders raised their standard in revolt. Thus both Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman and Damil bin Hatim became engaged in punishing them.

### **The Rule of Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil**

When Abu Uthman found the Yemenite tribes in a state of fighting and killing he sent Badr along with eleven men by ship to bring Abdur Rahman bin al-Dakhil from Africa. Abdur Rahman bin al-Dakhil reached Spain in 138 A.H. and was received with great fanfare by Abu Uthman and the followers of the Umayyads. Abu Uthman collected for him a large number of supporters. Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman was then engaged in putting down revolts in the Saragossa province. With the news of Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil's arrival in Spain he finished his task quickly and came to Toledo and met Damil bin Hatim, he had made the blunder of killing all the captives he had already promised safety of life to. This act of his displeased many of his commanders who deserted him and joined Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil. With this news the Arab chiefs who were scattered in different places, particularly the Yemenites, joined Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil. Now Yusuf and Ibn Hatim were left alone with the Fihri and Qais tribes. The Syrian support for Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil was logical but the Yemenites who previously opposed the Syrians lent their support because of their hostile attitude towards Yusuf and because Abdur Rahman had come to take the leadership from Yusuf. Even the Fihri and the Qaisi liked the Umayyad prince but they were with Yusuf and Ibn Hatim because of their towering personalities. One reason of Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil's success was that he had, before his arrival, become a household name due to his high morals and character. His sympathetic attitude to the Hijazi and Yemenite Arabs also gained him a lot of popularity. Thus, even those hostile to the Umayyads looked upon him with love and sympathy.

Finally, Ibn Hatim and Yusuf marched to Cordova from Toledo and Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil proceeded from the other side. The two forces clashed on Dhul Hijjah 10, 138 A.H. (May 14, 756 C.E.) and Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil won the battle after fierce fighting. Yusuf's son was captured along with some others while Yusuf and Ibn Hatim fled to safety. Ibn Hatim took refuge in Merida and Yusuf in Jaen. Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil then entered into Cordova and announced security of life to those who obeyed. Ibn Hatim and Yusuf collected forces once again. But finally, they were also forced to obey. Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil gave them peace and security on condition that they would live in Cordova and appear in the court once a day. In this way Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil and his descendants began to rule in Spain and the first phase of Islamic rule of Spain came to an end.

### **A Summary of the First Phase of Islamic Rule in Spain**

Spain was far from Damascus, the seat of the Caliphate. The way to Spain passed through Copt and Berber territories. Messages took a long time to arrive from one another. Spain was conquered at a time when the provinces of Iraq, Syria and Iran had engaged the attention of the renowned commanders and statesmen of the Caliphate. Because of these circumstances, Spain never attracted the proper attention it needed. This was the reason why Spain generally remained under the control of the Governor of Africa. Since Spain had become famous for its fertility and opportunity, many people of the Hijaz, Syria and Iraq who had no important engagements in their own territories shifted to Spain. These Arabs were welcomed and treated with much respect and high posts were offered to them. The Berbers of Africa had come to Spain in the very beginning and continued to arrive. This is how Spain became a Muslim colony in such a short time. The country was mainly populated by Christians, who showed total submission to the Muslim rule. A large number of Jews also formed part of the population. Thus, the mixed population of Spain consisted of different elements. Scores of rulers came to Spain during the first fifty-years of Muslim rule. The Spanish Muslims retained their sense of freedom together with a democratic temperament. The Christian population

never suffered any trouble and they had ample opportunity for economic development and academic progress. They received all of this simply in return for their allegiance.

At first, the Muslims had a great zeal for victory and reached the central areas of France. But very shortly in Spain, civil wars broke out and their military advances were halted and the Christian powers had time and opportunity to contemplate their plight. During these fifty years of Muslim rule, a different caliber of ruler came into power and the Spanish population saw an era of all-round development. Moreover, the victorious Muslim rulers began to marry Christian women who played a very effective role in softening their attitude to the Christians. They were no longer the objects of hate for them and the Muslims did a lot to educate and train the Christians. Gradually, they grew so strong that they would seek military help from their Muslim neighbors during their internal disputes.

When the Muslims came to Spain and the rule of Christian Goths came to end, the bishops and the commanders who had once fought the Muslims fled to the north. Muslim invaders had entered Spain from the southern side, which was fertile, pleasant and relatively warm and they populated this part of the country. The Arab people did not like the northern part, which was hilly and cold and less fertile. The Muslim invaders conquered the southern part but they entered the hilly areas of the Pyrenees only when they were chasing fugitives. Although this resulted in the Muslim conquest of Catalonia and Narbonne civil war broke out among the Muslims, and because of this they held back their advances.

### **Sovereign Christian Rule in the Northern Areas**

#### **Hilly Ranges of Spain**

##### **Pelayo**

A minor act of negligence on the part of the early Muslim conquerors proved very costly in future. It has already been mentioned that Anbasa had left unpunished a privateer named Pelayo who had

eluded the Muslims in the passes of the Pyrenees. When he set up his camp in the Pyrenees, he attracted the Christians who had been scattered and the bishops who brought the valuables of the Spanish churches. Thus, Pelayo's group in the hills grew strong in a very short time. Even though Pelayo's seat of power was, on all sides, surrounded by Muslim territories all of them ignored this group and never made a campaign against them thinking that they would never pose any real danger to the Muslims. It was logical to some extent for neither Pelayo nor the Christians ever mustered enough courage to descend from the high hills to take on the Muslims in the lowlands.

But the bishops who brought valuable gifts and relics to Pelayo made him a religious leader and a protector of the Christian relics. He remained confined to a small hilly area for about twelve or thirteen years. During this period he kept receiving supplies from the Christians. With the passage of time Pelayo rose in glory and the Christians would visit him from far off places, and pay him regards and see the relics. The negligence of Muslims encouraged the Christians to consider this an empire on its own and declared Pelayo their king and protector of their religion.

### **Alfonso**

On Pelayo's death his son came to power but he too expired after two or three years. Then Alfonso, the son-in-law of Pelayo was elected king and commander. The Muslims, on the other hand, were so deeply engaged in civil wars that they did not turn their attention to the emerging hilly State. Alfonso invited the Christians of Galicia, Aragon, and Catalonia to settle in the hills. He went to the extent of raiding and capturing those Christians who were reluctant to leave their fertile lands and brought them to populate the areas around his capital.

### **The Capital of the Christian State**

Asturias was made the capital of this sovereign rule of the Christians. Constant sermons of the bishops made the unwilling Christians come live there in peace. Gradually, the Christian population rose to such an

extent that the area occupied by them became crowded. Although they could achieve no success in the open areas, they were able to capture hills along the Pyrenees. This became the foundation of a small Christian state. They had no connection with either the Christian rulers of France or of Italy the religious bigotry present there was stronger than that of France or Italy. Their rules of governance were enacted and supported by the bishops. In 138 A.H. Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil brought about the end of the caliphate era and Alfonso also died the same year.

## Chapter 4

# **The Spanish Caliphs**

### Abdur Rahman bin Mu'awiyah, the Umayyad

#### Habits and Traits of Character

Abdur Rahman bin Mu'awiyah bin Hisham bin Abdul Malik bin Marwan bin Hakam was born in 113 A.H. His father, Mu'awiyah was cut short in the prime of his life when Abdur Rahman was only 5. His grandfather, Hisham bin Abdul Malik was then on the throne. He devoted his full attention to the education and training of his grandson. He had in mind to appoint Abdur Rahman his crown prince. But Hisham died when Abdur Rahman was only 12 years of age. Hisham's nephew Waleed replaced him. Abdur Rahman had in him kingly qualities from an early age. He kept away from evil and foul practices. He was well versed in courtly manners and the art of governance. He had also enjoyed the company of religious scholars and courtiers. As a young man, he learned swordsmanship and the art of warfare.



## **Emigration**

When the Umayyad caliphate saw its end in 132 A.H. and the Abbasid caliphate came into power Abdur Rahman was 20 years old. Abdur Rahman had an estate on the bank of the Euphrates. While the Umayyads were being massacred by the Abbasids in Damascus, Abdur Rahman was away at his estate. When he came to know of the death of the Umayyad's, he shifted to a forest and encamped there for safety.

One day when Abdur Rahman was in his camp and his four-year old son, who was playing outside, rushed into the camp shocked and frightened. When Abdur Rahman went outside, he noticed the black Abbasid flag flying and moving towards him. He took his son and fled towards the river. He was on way to the river when the Abbasids appeared chasing and promising him peace and safety. He paid no heed to their promise. He plunged into the river with his son stuck to his chest and swam across the river. His enemies saw him helpless and held themselves back from jumping into the river.

## **Abdur Rahman in Africa**

Abdur Rahman wandered from village to village in the guise of a traveler with his child on his lap. In such a wretched state, he reached Palestine where he came across his father's slave Badr who was heading for Egypt in the same state. Badr had with him some money and an ornament of Abdur Rahman's sister, which he gave to Abdur Rahman to improve his condition. He then started a journey as a merchant in the company of Badr and reached Egypt and contacted supporters of the Umayyads. After a short stay in Egypt, he left for the other territories of Africa.

## **Abdur Rahman's Plan to Found His Rule in Africa**

The Governor of Africa showed Abdur Rahman his love and respect. However, when he came to know that Abdur Rahman wanted to found his rule in Africa and at the same time that the Abbasid caliphate was growing strong, he made a plan to arrest Abdur Rahman and send him to the Abbasid Caliph. But the plot was

discovered and Abdur Rahman went into hiding along with his son and slave. Since the Governor of Africa had announced a substantial reward for the arrest of Abdur Rahman, the search was intensified and Abdur Rahman, the victim of circumstances, had to run for safety through forests and deserts facing starvation.

Once Abdur Rahman took refuge in the hut of an old woman. When a search party came to the hut, the old woman covered Abdur Rahman with cloth. Taking it to be a heap of clothes the party left the hut. Abdur Rahman was reduced to a plight that he neither had bread or shelter. After passing four or five years of a life fraught with dangers and beset with sorrows and suffering he came into contact with the Banu Nafusa, a branch of the Kinana tribe. When they discovered that Abdur Rahman's mother belonged to their tribe, they treated him like a relative and promised him all kinds of help and support. Abdur Rahman settled in Ceuta, an area where Banu Nafusa was in a majority. During all these years Abdur Rahman had learnt that it was not an easy matter to snatch power from the Governor of Africa. In Ceuta he had the opportunity of receiving intimate knowledge of the state of affairs in Spain as Ceuta was near to Spain. When he learned that Spain was continuously experiencing internal disturbances and discord and Yusuf, the ruler was preoccupied with the task of curbing violence and uprisings, Abdur Rahman a man of high ambition and exemplary courage and determination saw an opportunity for himself. He made no delay in sending his slave Badr to Spain with letters from him to the chiefs and other influential men sympathetic to the Umayyads.

### **Abdur Rahman in Spain**

Badr contacted Abu Uthman and Abdullah bin Khalid and informed them of the task ahead. They called the Syrian and Arab chiefs and placed the matter before them. They all agreed on inviting prince Abdur Rahman to Spain. Fortunately, the supporters of the Umayyads inhabited the southeastern coast of Spain and Abdur Rahman experienced no trouble in landing there. When the party consisting of eleven men sent to invite Abdur Rahman landed in Ceuta, they approached him with Badr at their head while Abdur

Rahman was performing prayers. When the head of the party, Abu Ghalib al-Tammam saluted Abdur Rahman and told him that the people of Spain were awaiting his presence the latter asked his name. Abdur Rahman knew him to be Abu Ghalib al-Tammam who grew very happy at this recognition and announced that Spain was within his reach. Following this, Abdur Rahman boarded the ship without loss of time, upon landing he was greeted by men numbering in the thousands.

### **Cordova Occupied**

The Umayyads and the Syrians in Spain rushed to offer their total submission and loyalty. Following this nearby cities and towns were seized. The rainy season stopped Yusuf's march to Cordova. Because of this, Abdur Rahman had a respite of seven months before he had to face Yusuf's attack, which finally resulted in Yusuf's defeat and Abdur Rahman, captured Cordova. After the victory was won a Yemenite chief, Abu Sabah said addressing his people that they had now revenged themselves against Yusuf and they should now kill Abdur Rahman to establish their own rule instead of the Umayyads. Since Abdur Rahman's forces had a large number of Syrians and Berbers, his opponents could not rise up against him. However, they kept waiting for an opportunity to cause Abdur Rahman some kind of setback. When he discovered their design against him, he simply formed a security squad for his safety and overlooked his opponents' activities. However, a few months later he had killed Abu Sabah for some fault he had committed.

### **The Appointments of Abdur Rahman**

Since Abdur Rahman, the Umayyad was quite young and strange to the Governors, people, tribes and their tastes and traits he also appointed men to high posts who brought opposition from the Spanish people and some of them got posts far below their expectations. In short, a large section of the population felt disappointed and aggrieved. Friends, relatives and supporters of Yusuf Fihri and Damil bin Hatim were also hostile to Abdur Rahman's regime.

## **Rebellions**

Despite showing no favor to any one section, he had to face a number of revolts in the initial stages of his reign. Yusuf Fihri was at that time kept in Cordova and was not allowed to leave. Two years after the conquest of Cordova, Abdur Rahman still had to devote most of his time and resources to curbing the opposition to his newfound rule. During these actions against his opponents, he felt the need to organize a force based on the Umayyads who survived the Abbasid onslaught. He felt that any such force could play a sincere role in safeguarding against opposing forces. Among the Umayyads surviving the Abbasid massacre in Egypt were Abdul Malik bin Umar bin Marwan bin Hakam and his son Umar bin Abdul Malik. Having heard of the conquest of Spain, they along with a dozen Umayyads came to Abdur Rahman. Welcoming their arrival Abdur Rahman appointed Abdul Malik bin Umar as the Governor of Seville and Umar bin Abdul Malik the governor of Moruba.

Since Abdur Rahman was alone in this strange country and he doubted the courage of the different groups and tribes to oppose the Abbasids, he kept himself confined to the rank of the Governor of Spain. He delivered addresses in the name of the Abbasid Caliph, although, he was their enemy at heart and considered the Abbasids his enemies. Due to this situation Abdur Rahman deemed it necessary to give his friends and close relatives high positions. Thus, when he appointed Abdul Malik and his son Umar as Governor he was opposed even more vehemently than before and the country was heading towards crisis and revolt.

## **Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman assassinated**

On being incited by the people Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman, the former ruler of Spain escaped from Cordova but his sons Abu Zaid Abdur Rahman and Abul Aswad could not. And the minister of Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman Fihri Damil bin Hatim also failed to escape from Cordova. All three of them were put in prison. Yusuf Fihri reached Toledo and as per their resolution, his supporters from all sides gathered round him. In a very short time twenty thousand troops

collected under his banner. Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman then invaded Seville and surrounded Abdul Malik bin Umar. But, in order to save time, he raised the siege and proceeded to Cordova. When Umar, the son of Abdul Malik heard of the siege on his father he proceeded to Seville. Both the father and son chased Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman's force. When Abdur Rahman found out about Yusuf's march at the head of twenty thousand men, he came out from Cordova to face Yusuf, Abdur Rahman attacked from the front and Abdul Malik and Umar came from behind. A large number of Yusuf's troops were killed and Yusuf fled to Toledo. Having reached near Toledo the Yemenites held consultations and considered that if they killed Yusuf and carried his head to Abdur Rahman he would forgive them for joining the revolt. They implemented their plan.

Yusuf Fihri was a brave and renowned Commander and had served Spain as Governor. He was known for his benevolence and politeness. But he was gullible too. He could believe his friends and supporters blindly and, at last, he lost his life because of this. In the wake of this bitter experience, Abdur Rahman was within his rights to kill the sons of Damil bin Hatim and Yusuf and he did so. However, Abul Aswad was put in a fort because of his young age. In order to create awe and terror in his enemies Abdur Rahman hung the dead bodies of the insurgents in public but such a brutal action created less fright and more sympathy for the Fihri family.

Abul Aswad bin Yusuf Fihri who was a captive in a fort declared himself blind after sometime. Every morning he went to the bank of the river outside the fort to answer the call of nature and then requested someone to take him back to the fort. Anyone of the soldiers moving about would return him back to the gate of the fort. When his blindness was fully established, his supervisors stopped keeping watch over him. In the meantime a slave of Abul Aswad began to pay regular visits to him. Abul Aswad set about sending messages to his friends and sympathizers through him and one day he escaped.

### **Managing Home Affairs**

After doing away with Yusuf Fihri, Abdur Rahman paid his attention to affairs at home. Having displayed a good deal of royal power and

grandeur he declared his sovereignty and expunged the name of the Abbasid Caliph from any official addresses in 146 A. H. The Abbasid caliphate was newly founded in the east and it was not yet free from dispute. With the news of Abdur Rahman's occupation of Spain, he felt aggrieved but could not dispatch an expedition against the newly proclaimed ruler. He was satisfied that addresses were still delivered in his name.

### **Abbasids' Action against Abdur Rahman**

The Abbasid Caliph grew very upset when he knew that Abdur Rahman had removed his name from his addresses. He then wrote to Ala'a bin Mughith, the Commander in Africa to invade Spain. Ala'a bin Mughith marched to Spain. Hashim bin Abdu Rabbih, a relative of Yusuf bin Abdur Rahman Fihri, and the chief of Toledo was deeply frustrated at the damage done to the Fihris. He then lured away a large number of Berbers besides those who joined him out of their hate for the brutalities committed against the Fihris.

Hashim Fihri then sent word to Ala'a bin Mughith to invade Spain without delay and counted upon his support and sent a black flag representing the Abbasids. The message fired the courage of Ala'a bin Mughith. Abdur Rahman was quite unaware of the impending danger. Hashim raised his banner of revolt in 146 A.H. and captured northern Spain and fortified Toledo. Abdur Rahman proceeded from Cordova at the head of a force to curb the revolt and besieged Toledo. The insurgents from Toledo took on the attack bravely, with the result that the siege dragged on for several months without yielding a conclusion. Meanwhile, Ala'a bin Mughith landed at Beja with the black flag sent by Caliph Mansur, the Abbasid.

Taking Ala'a bin Mughith to be deputed by the Caliph of the Muslims the people of Spain gathered under the banner of the Caliph. They considered Abdur Rahman to be a rebel. He grew very anxious over this news. It was a crucial moment for him because the insurgents of northern Spain were still beyond his control. Abdur Rahman raised his siege of Toledo and turned to the fresh threat. He had reached Carmona near Seville when Ala'a bin Mughith appeared on the scene. A large number of Abdur Rahman's soldiers rushed to Ala'a bin Mughith. The

people of Toledo, being free from the siege, sent a column to reinforce Ala'a's troops. Abdur Rahman had to take refuge in the fort of Carmona.

### **Courageous Act of Abdur Rahman**

After surrounding Carmona Ala'a bin Mughith sent troops to nearby areas on a mission to plunder for supplies. The Berbers of Spain and other people also followed suit. The entire country of Spain was plunged into killings, plunder and disorder. Abdur Rahman remained besieged in the fort of Carmona for two months. In such a state of despair, Abdur Rahman told his companions that the time had come to go down fighting rather than to die of hunger. They started a large bonfire in the open and seven hundred fighters put the sheaths of their swords into it to declare that they would either become victorious or die fighting. Thus they threw open the gates of the fort and fell upon the enemy. The invaders had, after such a long siege, become careless about the besieged and were no longer on the alert. Seven hundred fighters like hungry lions launched an attack so heavy and unexpected that the besieging force fled leaving behind seven thousand corpses and Spain was restored to Abdur Rahman.

### **Macabre Joke**

On this occasion Abdur Rahman played a macabre joke with Caliph Mansur Abbasi. He cut off the heads of Ala'a bin Mughith and all the Commanders of Abbasid force, he made holes in the ears of each one and fastened a paper in each one with his name and post. He then put all the heads in trunks and dispatched them very cautiously with the caravans of the pilgrims to Makkah. From there, it was sent to Caliph Mansur. When the trunk containing the head of Ala'a bin Mughith was opened there was a letter from Mansur directing Ala'a bin Mughith to invade Spain. It also contained the pieces of black flag sent by Mansur to Mughith. Mansur saw the heads and passed the simple remark: "Thank Allah there lies a sea between Abdur Rahman and me". Again, he said one day, "I am amazed at the courage, wisdom and prudence of Abdur Rahman that he founded his rule in a far off country in the absence of resources." The battle of Carmona took place during the last part of 146 A.H.

## **Rebels annihilated**

Following the conquest of Carmona Abdur Rahman came to Toledo with the force headed by his slave Badr and Tammam bin Alqama who defeated the insurgents of the territory after a fierce battle. Prominent chiefs like Hisham bin Abdu Rabbih Fihri, Hayat bin Waleed Yahsabi and Uthman bin Hamza bin Ubaidullah bin Umar bin Khattab were arrested and killed by the order of Abdur Rahman.

A number of Yemenite tribes had joined Ala'a bin Mughith and most of them were killed by Abdur Rahman and his men in the battle of Carmona. The people of Yemen developed a deep desire to avenge their blood. In 147 A.H. Sayed Yahsabi, known as Matri rose in revolt and captured Seville. Abdur Rahman proceeded from Cordova to punish Matri. Matri then took refuge in a fort of Seville, which was besieged by Abdur Rahman. Attab bin Alqami was then in Sidonia city and had promised Matri to join him in the revolt. Thus, he marched at the head of an army.

Having heard this news Abdur Rahman sent his slave Badr at the head of an army to go and stand between Attab and Matri. Matri was killed and Khalifa bin Marwan was appointed as Commander. Nevertheless, they had to seek peace. Abdur Rahman granted the petition but demolished the fort. He then came back to Cordova. Following this, Abdullah bin Khrasha Asadi of Jaen rose in revolt. Abdur Rahman mobilized his army but Abdullah's companions deserted him with the result Abdullah Asadi sought forgiveness and was pardoned. Ghayath bin Mir Asadi revolted in 150 A.H. The Governor of Beja gave battle and Ghayath was killed in action and his force was defeated and dispersed. The same year, 150 A.H., Abdur Rahman laid the foundation stone of the fortification of the city of Cordova.

In 151 A.H., a person named Shaqna (Ibn Abdul Wahid) and a teacher by profession claimed that he was the descendant of Husain bin Ali and his name was Abdullah bin Muhammad. Very soon the credulous Berbers gathered around him while others also followed suit. When the number of his followers grew strong, he raised his standard of revolt in Pelencia, the northern province of Spain and captured Santarem. Abdur Rahman proceeded to punish him.



Having heard of the march of Abdur Rahman, Ibn Abdul Wahid fled to the hills. Abdur Rahman returned to Cordova. He then appointed Habib bin Abdul Malik as the Governor of Toledo and directed him to punish Ibn Abdul Wahid. Habib bin Abdul Malik deputed Sulaiman bin Uthman bin Marwan bin Uthman bin Affan to punish Ibn Abdul Wahid. But the latter captured Sulaiman and killed him. Following this he captured some nearby territories.

Having heard this Abdur Rahman himself proceeded from Cordova in 152 A.H. Ibn Abdul Wahid fled to the hills once again and Abdur Rahman had to return without engagement for the second time.

Abdur Rahman sent his slave Badr in 154 A.H. to attack him but Ibn Abdul Wahid took refuge in the hills. Later in 154 A.H., Abdur Rahman himself led an expedition but again could not get him.

In 155 A.H., Abdur Rahman sent Abu Uthman Ubaidullah bin Uthman at the head of a strong army but it proved an exercise in futility. Ibn Abdul Wahid killed a large part of Abu Uthman's force by playing a trick and plundered several cities as well. Compelled by the situation Abdur Rahman once again led his force in 155 A.H. and deputed his son Sulaiman in Cordova. When he arrived at the Santarem fort, he was informed that the Yemenite tribes and the people of Seville had revolted against him. He had to leave his task unfinished and he hurried back. He ordered Abdul Malik bin Umar to go ahead and attack Seville.

Abdul Malik reached Seville and sent his son Umayyah to snipe at the enemy. But, finding the people of Seville alert, he came back without doing his job. On inquiry, he gave the reason for his return. Abdul Malik accused his son of coming back for fear of death. He then charged him with cowardice and cut off his head. Following this he said addressing his men: "We all know how mercilessly we have been killed and had to leave our country. Now that we have this piece of land, Spain, to live on and we can't afford to lose it too. It is our obligation to keep it even at the cost of our lives." All of them supported the idea and vowed to lay down their lives for the purpose. The Yemenite tribes had a large and strong force in Seville and it was the last extension of their power. Because of this, the conquest of Seville was not an easy job. Abdul Malik bin Umar launched a

powerful attack and his force gave him very active support. The people of Seville tasted defeat. Even though Abdul Malik received several injuries, he showed exemplary bravery and steadfastness in the battle. When at the end of the battle, Abdul Malik wanted to put down his sword his fingers refused to open out and the sword remained in his hand. Meanwhile Abdur Rahman appeared and said, seeing the blood stained sword in his hand and hearing the account of the battle: "Brother Abdul Malik", I wanted my son Hisham to marry your daughter." Following this remark Abdur Rahman appointed Abdul Malik bin Umar as his minister.

Two chiefs of Seville named Abdul Ghaffar bin Hamid and Hayat bin Flaqash and the rulers of Banila city and Seville respectively and Amr, the ruler of Beja fled the battlefield. They gathered the Arab tribes once again. Abdur Rahman attacked them in 157 A.H., and defeated and killed them and their supporters. These events created doubts and misgivings in the mind of Abdur Rahman concerning the Arab tribes. As a result of this, he began to recruit non-Arabs and slaves to curb the rising of Arab tribes against the throne. The same reasons had perhaps, compelled the Abbasids to prefer other forces to the Arabs even though they were themselves Arabs. They always feared their treason. Abdur Rahman sent an expedition in 160 A.H. against Ibn Abdul Wahid, which besieged Santarem Fort but returned unsuccessful after one month. At last, in 162 A.H., Ibn Abdul Wahid came out of the fort and went to a village and two persons among his companions assassinated him and took his head to Abdur Rahman. Thus came to an end the mischief that had disturbed Abdur Rahman for so long.

Before the assassination of Ibn Abdul Wahid, Abdur Rahman bin Habib known as Saqlabi built a force in Africa in 161 A.H. and planned to invade Spain. The two forces were arrayed against one another in the field of Tadmir. Many Berbers of Spain joined his campaign. Abdur Rahman bin Habib then sent word to Sulaiman Yaqazan, the ruler of Seville to either obey the Abbasid caliphate or be ready to face attack. On refusal, Abdur Rahman bin Habib attacked Sulaiman but was defeated and driven away. On being informed Abdur Rahman the Umayyad marched from Cordova. With the news of the approach of Abdur Rahman, he (Abdur Rahman bin Habib) fled

to the hills. On the announcement of a reward for Abdur Rahman bin Habib, one of his companions cut off his head and presented it to Abdur Rahman the Umayyad and got his reward.

Shortly after that, Dihya Ghassani took refuge in fort of Almeria in 163 A.H. and raised his standard of revolt. Abdur Rahman sent Shaheed bin Isa to punish him who defeated and killed the rebel. After a short while the Berbers raised their heads in revolt under Ibrahim bin Sajrah, Abdur Rahman sent Badr to deal with him. Badr killed Ibrahim and dispersed the Berbers. During the same days, a Commander named Salama escaped to Cordova and rose in revolt after seizing Toledo. Abdur Rahman sent Habib bin Abdul Malik to punish Salama. Habib surrounded Toledo and Salama died during the siege and his companions dispersed.

### **Reasons behind the Revolts**

Abdur Rahman could not rule peacefully and the reasons are not hard to find. The Muslim population of Spain had in those days developed a taste and temperament for rivalries and insurgence. They also could not obey anybody sincerely. They could not tolerate the reign of Abdur Rahman because his dynastic rule had perished in the East. The main reason behind the worries of Abdur Rahman was that the Abbasid caliphs were continually hatching plots against him. The Abbasid caliphs had chosen Baghdad to be their Headquarters, which was far from Abdur Rahman and a large sea kept Baghdad and Spain apart.

They would hear about the power and strength of Abdur Rahman's rule but were unable to do away with him due to the great distance between them. Twice they tried to invade but every time their commanders were killed and the Abbasid campaigns had to face ignominious defeat. Failing to achieve military victory, they made use of the same secret planning against Abdur Rahman that they had already used to bring about the ruin of the ancestors of Abdur Rahman the Umayyads. They began to propagate their favor among Arab tribes and men of treasonous nature and to win their support for the Abbasid caliphate. Thus, most of the Arab chiefs and the Berbers who had recently accepted Islam stood by the Abbasids. They rose in

revolt repeatedly and every time they incurred a setback, but they did not receive any help from Baghdad.

The shortsighted rebellious chiefs kept Abdur Rahman engaged in dealing with their insurgent activities and provided the Christians of Asturias with an opportunity to get stronger.

Alfonso's son Fruela had enough time to gather Christians around him and to think of ways to develop plans for the future. The forces of Cordova on the other hand did not have an opportunity to extend any help to the Muslims occupying southern France. If Abdur Rahman had dispatched his forces to take on the French, he could not have saved Spain.

Now, in view of the constant revolts by the Abbasid supporters, the French invaded and besieged the city of Narbonne. The Muslims of the city faced the rigor of the siege for six years without any help from outside. But, at last, southern France slipped out of their hands after being under their possession for forty years.

After Abdur Rahman bin Habib, the Commander of the Baghdad caliphate had been killed two persons named Husain bin Asi and Sulaiman bin Yaqzan were left to carry out the subversive activities of the Abbasids. They ruled in Saragossa and its surrounding areas. They entered into correspondence with the Caliph Mahdi who was very pious. However, human nature demanded him to hate the Umayyads. They got the support of Baghdad and then they urged Charlemagne, the king of France to invade Spain and assured him that Mahdi Abbasi also supported the proposal of doing away with Abdur Rahman and his rule. Charlemagne could not have got a better opportunity to win Spain for nothing could have added more to his glory and dignity. Since Muslim bravery and determination were well known to him, he made no haste in making an attack. Besides making large-scale military preparations, he collected information of all kinds through the insurgents and the traitors. Together they made it a point to bring about the release of Abul Aswad, the son of Yusuf Fihri from a fort adjoining Cordova so that broader Muslim support could be expected. It has already been mentioned how Abul Aswad escaped by declaring himself blind. Charlemagne prepared to fight with several

hundred thousand troops and the expulsion of the Muslims from Spain and the foundation of Christian rule were advanced as the two-fold purpose of the invasion. The insurgents of Saragossa took up arms before the invasion of Charlemagne. Abdur Rahman was not fully aware of the moral impact of the Baghdad Caliphate, plots hatched by the Muslims of Spain and the huge Christian preparations. Abdur Rahman sent his Commander Thalba bin Ubaid to punish the insurgents of Saragossa. After a series of battles Sulaiman bin Yaqzan arrested Thalba and sent him to Charlemagne to convince him of his power and support. Thalba's troops fled the battlefield, joined Abdur Rahman in Cordova and informed him of the power of the insurgents.

Shortly after the king of France, who was lying on the other side of the Pyrenees, moved ahead. The number of troops was so large that they had to go through two separate passes to meet under the fortification of the city of Saragossa. When the Muslims of Saragossa heard of the huge Christian army and their plan to wipe out all Muslim signs and traces from the face of Spain, they reproached Sulaiman bin Yaqzan. Husain bin Asi too shuddered to think of such a consequence and shut the door of Saragossa. When Charlemagne felt that the Muslims would withdraw their support from him and join the camp of Abdur Rahman, he returned to France without achieving any success.

While Charlemagne was marching to Spain, the Christian State of Asturias had extended its support to him considering him the savior of the Christians. When he began to march back to France because of fear of the Muslims, the Christians of the hilly state started raiding the rear of the Christian force. By the time it had reached the northern part of Spain some of the renowned Commanders and a large part of the force had been killed.

On the return of Charlemagne Husain bin Asi assassinated Sulaiman bin Yaqzan and took over the leadership of the insurgents. Meanwhile, Abdur Rahman also reached Saragossa from Cordova at the head of a strong force and laid siege to the city. Husain bin Asi sought peace at the cost of his obedience and Abdur Rahman conceded to it. Now, in consequence of the French King's march on Spain Abdur Rahman proceeded to France and reached the French

plains. During this march, Abdur Rahman ignored the Christians occupying the hilly areas.

Abdur Rahman ravaged the southern part of France and demolished forts and the fortifications of several cities. Charlemagne escaped to the northern part of France and did nothing to save the southern provinces. However, Abdur Rahman could not stay in France for long because he was well aware of the state of affairs in his country. He had hardly passed a few months in Cordova when Husain bin Asi rose in revolt in Saragossa. Abdur Rahman sent Ghalib bin Tammam bin Alqama to put down the revolt. They fought against one another for about a year without any result. Now Abdur Rahman himself marched to Saragossa in 166 A.H. and killed Husain bin Asi and put a large number of rebels to death. During all these years of turmoil and turbulence Abul Aswad kept aloof from court politics and was left to keep the banner of rebellion flying. However, the relatives of those killed by Abdur Rahman were burning with anger and shock. Finally, they persuaded Abul Aswad in Talun to take up arms and they gathered around him. But Abdur Rahman fought and drove him away. He took refuge in the mountains. Abul Aswad came out once again in 169 A.H. but fled again leaving behind four thousand men dead and lost. Abul Aswad died in 170 A.H. His companions who were still leading a life of robbing and plundering elected his brother Qasim bin Yusuf their chief and very soon a large number of troops came under his banner. Abdur Rahman attacked and killed him.

In the same year, 170 A.H. Harun Rashid came to the throne. Charlemagne, in order to gain peace, sought an agreement with Abdur Rahman and offered his daughter in marriage. The Muslim ruler while granting his peace offer declined to marry his daughter. Historians have explained this refusal in a number of ways. Charlemagne knew very well that the Caliph of Baghdad was the enemy of Abdur Rahman. Although he expected no help from Harun Rashid, but anticipating his campaign against Abdur Rahman he sent emissaries to Baghdad to seek his friendship. He was very hopeful of the success of his mission because he had once led his force to Spain in response to the request of Mahdi, the father of Harun Rashid. Charlemagne was right. Harun Rashid greeted his emissaries warmly and sent to Charlemagne a watch as a gift. Charlemagne, in fact, had in mind the destruction of Muslim

rule in Spain. Harun Rashid also had his own interest in view. But neither one of them could achieve their purpose.

## **Death of Abdur Rahman**

Following the peace agreement with Charlemagne, Abdur Rahman had very little to threaten him. He was completely and firmly in control of the situation after putting down all opposition internally and externally. However, in 171 A.H. his slave Badr and some of his relatives joined hands to seize the throne of Spain. Abdur Rahman uncovered the plot and banished them to Africa. He died in 172 A.H. at the age of 58 or 59 after ruling his country for 33 years and 4 months. In accordance with his will, he was succeeded by his son Hisham.

## **An Assessment of Abdur Rahman's Life**

Twenty years of his early life he passed in study and the assemblies of the scholars. Swordsmanship was a must for a youth in those days. After twenty years of a comfortable life, he passed through a period where he had to hide himself like a thief and everyone appeared to be thirsty for his blood. He had neither bread to eat nor clothes to wear. After wandering for years in forests and deserts and from one country to another, he became the king of a country. However, this power proved to be a crown of thorns. Had he been anyone else they would have perished right from the beginning but he was lion-hearted and irrepressible. He came to Spain a stranger with no sympathy and no support from any quarter but he turned the tide in his favor by virtue of his far-sightedness and wisdom.

He proved his mettle as a commander and a swordsman although he had no such experience before arriving in Spain. His performance as a commander was beyond criticism. He achieved success in campaigns where his renowned and seasoned commanders met with failure. On no occasion did he lose hope or courage despite revolts and sufferings of the worst nature. No one of his contemporaries could ever fathom the depth of his courage and fortitude.

His life was full of campaigns and adventures but his love for art and learning remained undiminished. He opened educational institutions



all over his country to spread learning and wisdom to the masses.

Abdur Rahman fortified all the cities of his state and built mosques wherever they were needed. The Grand mosque of Cordova has no parallel in grandeur and magnificence. Although Abdur Rahman could not complete it in his lifetime the foundation of the mosque revealed the lofty ambitions of the Muslim ruler. The beauty, magnificence and dimensions of the mosque brought men of weak faith to consider it on par with the Ka'bah in glory and sanctity although all mosques deserve an equal respect. His fondness for constructing buildings was greater than that of Shah Jahan of India and in prudence, he excelled Aristotle. For him, to found his rule in Spain was far greater than all the victories of Tamerlane and Napoleon put together.

In patronage of the arts and learning even the Caliphs Harun Rashid and Mamun Rashid did not surpass him. Moreover, the Abbasid dynasty did not produce, after Harun and Mamun, such rulers who could value the real worth of the arts and learning as the children of Abdur Rahman did, with the result that Cordova surpassed Baghdad in fame and glory.

Ibn Hayyan writes that Abdur Rahman was very kind, courteous and cultured. He spoke very eloquently; his understanding was deep and insight sharp. He never formed an opinion about matters in haste but once it was formed, he stuck to it firmly and strongly. However, he would consult his courtiers and advisors on all important issues. Abdur Rahman was brave and attacked his enemy first. His face was awesome for friends and foes alike. He delivered the Friday sermon in the grand mosque himself, attended the sick and joined public assemblies and marriage parties.

During his rule his guards and caretakers were changed one after another and they included Tammam bin Alqama, Yusuf bin Bakht, Abdul Karim bin Mahran, Abdur Rahman bin Mughith, and Mansur, the eunuch. Although Abdur Rahman appointed some persons as his minister but he never acted blindly on their advice. He had formed a committee of nobles and notables, which advised him in administrative affairs. This consultative body consisted of Abu Uthman, Abdullah bin Khalid, Abu Ubaida, Shaheed bin Isa, Thalba bin Ubaid, and Athim bin Muslim.



## His Features and His Children

Abdur Rahman was a handsome man having a commanding stature and little flesh, fair complexioned and gray haired. As per some historians, he had a weak sense of smell. He left behind nine daughters and eleven sons, Sulaiman being the eldest. However, he appointed his second son Hisham as his crown prince. Sulaiman was the son he had fled with from the bank of the Euphrates. However, he knew Hisham was more able and was more worthy of throne.

## Order and Discipline

As per the statements of a western historian, Abdur Rahman was kind and benevolent but the rebels and traitors compelled him to deal with them harshly. He was inclined to learning and literature but his situation made him an alert and experienced commander. Abdur Rahman passed the earlier part of his life in luxury and faced adverse conditions happily and courageously. Before consolidating his position as a ruler he called the Umayyads and their associates to Spain at his own expense and offered them high posts and positions according to their caliber and abilities. Abdur Rahman could put up with trouble and suffering silently and even his opponents admitted and admired this.

Abdur Rahman had divided his country into six provinces and put a commander in each of them. Every commander had under him two administrators and six ministers and each official was assisted by a Qadi (judge) and other officials. Abdur Rahman would always consider the welfare of his people. He enacted laws to what brought prosperity to the masses and granted them freedom to possess property without fear of interference.

Abdur Rahman was very fond of spreading knowledge and education. He constructed roads throughout Spain, set up a postal system and kept horses at every halting point to carry news and information to the capital from all over the country.

Abdur Rahman did away with the robbers and bandits with a heavy hand and the Berbers who used to create disturbances every now and then were kept silent. He would tour extensively around his country

to assess the situation and gain first hand knowledge of the performance of his Governors and officials. Wherever he went he started welfare schemes for the needy and the masses as a whole.

Abdur Rahman's benevolence was for one and all and everyone was benefited by it. Although he built mosques and other buildings in large number to serve as welfare centers throughout the country, he showed exemplary interest in and fondness for making the capital, Cordova, the most beautiful and magnificent city. He planted a date palm tree in the courtyard of his royal palace and it was the first date palm tree in Spain. He held the scholars and intellectuals in esteem and he provided the best of education for his sons and ordered them to take part in all royal and legal affairs.

In order to create in the common people a love for learning he would organize meetings of poets to recite their poems and he rewarded them. He personally would often attend these meetings. Regardless of the luxurious surroundings and abundance of wealth, he never lost his military character nor did he ever lack in piety and abstinence. The most suitable spot for building the world famous mosque of Cordova was owned by the Christians. Abdur Rahman refrained from acquiring it by force. He accepted it only when the Christians sold it to him. Furthermore, he allotted to them lands at several other places in the city to build churches. Abdur Rahman had all the qualities of head and heart needed to be a successful king. The day Abdur Rahman came to the throne, Spain became free from the control of the Eastern Islamic caliphate. But Abdur Rahman was wise enough not to claim the caliphate for himself. He included his name in the weekly addresses only after ten years of his rule. He knew very well that there was a section in Spain, which disliked the Umayyads and loved the Abbasids and they recognized the Islamic center of the East only. Had Abdur Rahman claimed the caliphate for himself a large number of Muslims would have taken up arms against him. However, he gradually, brought about the change and turned it in his favor to be called the caliph of the Muslims and Commander of the Faithful. One historian said he spoke eloquently and effectively and was very sober, shrewd and a great administrator. He never liked to pass his time in fun and sport nor took rest without need. He liked white clothes and ate with the poor and needy if any such person would turn up at meal times.

Abdur Rahman was one of those great men who brought a nation to life and changed the course of history.

### **Hisham bin Abdur Rahman**

Since Abdur Rahman was called Caliph, his son Hisham and his descendants can be known as Sultan or Caliph.

#### **Birth**

Sultan Hisham bin Abdur Rahman was born in Shawwal 139 A.H. after the entry of his father into Spain. Hisham's mother, Halal, was presented as a gift to him by the former ruler Yusuf Fihri after finalizing a temporary truce. Abdur Rahman married her after freeing her and he loved her intensely.

#### **Accession**

Hisham became the ruler of Spain at the age of 32 or 33 years of age as per the will of his father. He had been in Merida as Governor when his father breathed his last. He ascended the throne there and his name was reiterated in the Friday sermons throughout Spain. His Brother Abdullah was in Cordova and he lost no time in occupying the royal palace and the capital Cordova. His brother Sulaiman was at the time Governor of Toledo. Hisham marched on Cordova and arrested Abdullah after a short engagement.

He forgave his brother and gave him a large estate and included him among his ministers and advisors.

#### **Brother's Revolt**

Spain was inhabited by people of varied nature and they could easily rise in revolt following the death of Abdur Rahman. But the deceased ruler had broken the back of these elements so violently that they could not muster courage to take up arms against the new ruler. However, Hisham's brothers began to create troubles for him. Sulaiman, the Governor of Toledo revolted and declared his sovereignty. Abdullah on the other hand escaped to his brother Sulaiman. Sultan Hisham pardoned the fault of his brothers and expected their return to correct behavior.

## **Battle**

Ghalib Ghafqi was the minister of Sulaiman in Toledo and had been very loyal to Abdur Rahman. He advised the two brothers to keep from rebelling against the center of the government but they became angry and put him to prison. On being informed of this event, Hisham wrote to them against the imprisonment of such a loyal and trusted old servant. Sulaiman and Abdullah turned violent and reacted by killing Ghalib Ghafqi in the presence of Hisham's emissary and saying this was the reply to his letter. In consequence of such a harsh reply, Sultan Hisham marched to Toledo at the head of a twenty-thousand man army and the two forces clashed at a little distance from Toledo. Sulaiman and Abdullah suffered defeat and took refuge in the fort of Toledo, which was well known for its strength. The fort being hard to conquer Hisham laid a siege around Toledo. Leaving his son and Abdullah in Toledo, Sulaiman took a company of soldiers and marched on Cordova. Abdul Malik, the Governor of Cordova came out and greeted Sulaiman with swords and arrows. Sulaiman fled to Murcia and took to plundering. Hearing this Sultan Hisham deputed a Commander to continue the siege of Toledo and proceeded to Cordova to keep an eye on the movement of Sulaiman.

## **Brothers pardoned**

Fed up with the long siege Abdullah entrusted himself to Sultan Hisham without seeking the safety of his life. Hisham not only forgave his brother's fault but also showed him love and respect and allotted him an estate in Toledo to settle in.

Sulaiman collected a large number of men in Murcia. Hisham sent by young son Umar at the head of an army, which defeated Sulaiman and drove away the rebels. After wanderings for two years, he sought the forgiveness of Sultan Hisham who not only granted him forgiveness but also gave him a respectable position in his court. Sulaiman then expressed his desire to settle in Africa. Hisham granted him permission and purchased his estate in Spain. Sulaiman settled in Africa but took to playing the role of an Abbasid agent and kept the people of Spain incited against Sultan Hisham.

## **Attack on France**

After dealing with his brothers successfully Sultan Hisham led a forty-thousand-man force against France and conquered the entire south of France and regained control of Catalonia province. He collected an unimaginable amount of wealth and possessions from these campaigns. The Christians of the Pyrenees made an attempt to intercept the retreating army as they had done with Charlemagne's army in the past.

## **Punishing the rebellious Christians**

Having reached Cordova in 175 A.H. Sultan Hisham sent his minister Yusuf bin Bakht to punish the Christians who had established themselves as an independent force in the hills. He invaded the State of Asturias and ravaged it thoroughly. Its ruler Bermundo was arrested. Since the territory was not worthy of living in it was restored to its ruler in return for his loyalty and tribute.

## **Construction of the Cordova Mosque**

The Muslims received an enormous amount of spoils of war from the campaign in southern France and the Christian provinces. One-fifth of it was presented to Sultan Hisham, which amounted to 45 thousand gold coins. The Sultan spent all of this for the construction of the Cordova Mosque.

## **Insurgence in Cataluna put down**

During the campaign Abdul Malik, the Governor, issued a strange order. He had a large number of Christian prisoners from Galicia, Asturias, Catalonia and south France. As a price for their liberty, he ordered them to demolish the fortifications of Narbonne and carry the stones to Cordova. They did it with much difficulty and the Sultan released them all. Those stones were used for building a part of the eastern wall of the Cordova Mosque. Moreover, the Christian States were restored to them after they promised to obey the Muslim rule. It was done because the Arab chiefs disliked the cold climate of those northern hilly states. This is the reason that the Muslim population in the southern provinces was far larger than in the north, with the result

that the Christians in the southern part embraced Islam more than in other parts.

### **Cordova Mosque completed**

Sultan Hisham paid exclusive attention to the completion of the Cordova Mosque whose foundation was laid by his father Abdur Rahman bin Muawi'yah. Sultan Hisham appointed his son, Hakam as the Governor of Toledo in 175 A.H. The bridge, over the Guadalquivir river (from the Arabic Wadi al-Kabir) in Cordova, was rebuilt in 176 A.H. The bridge was first constructed by the governor Samh during the caliphate of Umar bin Abdul Aziz. Sultan Hisham made it wider, stronger and more beautiful. Abbasid agents kept making secret plans in Spain. Sulaiman, the brother of Sultan Hisham kept misleading both the Muslims and the Christians in Africa (Morocco) and Charlemagne in the north had established friendly relations with Caliph Harun Rashid of Baghdad against Sultan Hisham and the new-born Christian State of Galicia began to show signs of revolt. Sultan Hisham sent Abdul Karim bin Abdul Wahid bin Mughith to Galicia without delay. Muslim troops reached Galicia and returned only after punishing the insurgents and making them obey the Muslim rule. Meanwhile, the Berbers gathered together and took up arms against Sultan Hisham. Abdul Qadir bin Aban bin Abdullah was sent to deal with the insurgents who killed a large number of Berbers and drove away the rest. The event took place in 178 A.H. The people of Galicia rose against the Muslim rule once again with the French supporting them. Sultan Hisham sent Abdul Malik bin Abdul Wahid bin Mughith at the head of an army with the instructions to make inroads into France after punishing the people of Galicia and to meet the Muslim troops advancing into France from the other side. Sultan Hisham had sent another army to France. Being informed of the advance of the Muslim forces, the Christian chief deserted the city and kept fleeing ahead of the invading troops. The Muslim commander then turned to France, he met the other Muslim force and ravaged most of the French cities and forts and returned victoriously.

### **Death**

Sultan Hisham bin Abdur Rahman died in Safar, 180 A.H. at the age of 40 years and 4 months after ruling for 7 years and some months.

### **Assessment of Hisham's Life**

Abdur Rahman had spent 80 thousand dinars on the foundation of the Cordova Mosque, while Sultan Hisham expended one hundred and sixty thousand dinars for the construction and completion of the mosque. Hisham would, like his father, wear white but very simple cheap garments. He was fond of hunting but not at the cost of the state's administration and his religious duties. He had abandoned all this during his last days. He always kept his court open for the poor and the needy and they could find access to him without any hindrance. He sacrificed even his rest and sleep for the peace and welfare of his people and felt pleasure and satisfaction in patrolling the streets and lanes of the city to be acquainted with the problems and sufferings of his subjects. What was charged as a fine from offenders was spent on public welfare instead of being placed in the public treasury. If any of the Muslims were taken captive by the Christians, they were liberated by paying their ransom from the public treasury.

During the period of Sultan Hisham, rich people of Cordova built beautiful and magnificent buildings, which added to the beauty of the city. Although academic centers and assemblies were strong during the tenure of Abdur Rahman, Sultan Hisham further promoted learning by declaring Arabic compulsory in all Madrasas. The result was that the Christians of Spain learned Arabic and became able to learn the Qur'an and Islam directly and they accepted Islam in large numbers. Now the Muslims were no longer a terror to them, they became so close that the Muslims began to marry Christian women. And the Christians chose to dress like the Muslims. In habits, traits and style of life Sultan Hisham resembled Umar bin Abdul Aziz to a great extent. The entire population of Spain addressed him as "Sultan, The Just."

Sultan Hisham was more pious and religious-minded than his father, Abdur Rahman. While Abdur Rahman's court was dominated by religious and spiritual men, Muslim jurists and scholars grew in power and influence during the reign of Sultan Hisham.

It was during his reign that the four different schools of Muslim jurists were brought into practice. Imam Malik bin Anas was very famous in

Madinah at that time and his doctrine was largely practiced by the people of Hijaz. A group of Muslims from Spain came to Imam Malik, stayed with him for sometime and then returned to Spain. Being acquainted with the style and functioning of Sultan Hisham, he expressed his love and respect for him. He used to say that Hisham bin Abdur Rahman alone deserved to be called Caliph of the Muslims. He was right. In devotion and piety, wisdom and bravery, fighting qualities and leadership Hisham was like his father but in devotion and practice he even excelled his father.

These utterances of Imam Malik caused irritation among the Abbasids and they, in turn, began to put the Imam in trouble. During the early period of Hisham some Muslim jurists of Spain like Firaun bin Abbas, Isa bin Dinar and Sayeed bin Abi Hind met Imam Malik on the occasion of Hajj. They benefited enormously from the company of the Imam and they returned to Spain and began to preach his legal system. Under the influence of their preaching Abu Abdullah Zaid, the Chief Justice of Spain also accepted Imam Malik's doctrine. Sultan Hisham too became a devotee of the Imam and ordered the treasurer to bear all expenses of those who wanted to go to Imam Malik for learning Fiqh and Hadith. Now all legal judgments were delivered according to Imam Malik's school of law.

### **The Crown Prince**

Sultan Hisham appointed his son, Hakam as his crown prince and took the oath of allegiance for Hakam from the courtiers. On this occasion Hisham said to Hakam:

"You must not make any difference between the poor and the rich. Treat your subordinates with kindness but punish any atrocious governor heavily. Keep full control over your forces and see that these forces are used for serving the country not destroying it; fulfill your promises; make every effort to keep your subjects happy for angry people pose a threat to the stability of the administration.

Never ignore the farmer. Be careful that their crops are not destroyed nor their meadows. Behave well and the people will



invoke blessings on you. In the case that you put this advice into practice you will be put in the category of the most successful kings."

Sultan Hisham passed his whole tenure fighting and invading his enemies. But his religious, moral, academic and social deeds lead us to disbelieve that his military character was the most dominant. The reason behind the foundation of Umayyad dynasty in Spain and its survival for three hundred years was that its founder was Abdur Rahman and his successor was Hisham. Even though Hisham had a short tenure of seven years and eight month his son, Hakam became an able and sensible ruler.

### **Hakam bin Hisham**

Hakam bin Hisham succeeded his father in 180 A.H. But he had to begin with insurgencies and revolts.

### **Sulaiman and Abdullah Rebel**

Sultan Hisham's brother Sulaiman had been staying in Africa (Morocco). He was engaged in creating disturbances in Spain. Abdullah, another brother of Hisham was then stationed in an estate adjoining Toledo. With the news of Hisham's demise Abdullah went to his brother Sulaiman. The latter had a large number of Berbers and bandits at his command. The two brothers decided to capture Cordova and become the rulers of Spain. Sulaiman was already in contact with Charlemagne, the King of France and other frontier chiefs. It was suggested that Abdullah should make a personal visit to Charlemagne and invite him to invade Spain and lend support to the revolt they were going to launch. Charlemagne agreed to the proposal and sent his son at the head of a strong army. Abdullah then came back, instigated the Governor of Toledo to rise in revolt and he captured the city. Sulaiman on the other hand reached Valencia province and declared his sovereignty as the true successor of the dynastic rule.

Close on the heels of Sulaiman and Abdullah's revolt the son of Charlemagne set his foot on the plane of Spain after crossing the Pyrenees seized a number of cities and besieged Barcelona. The

Governor of Barcelona offered his allegiance to Charlemagne but refused the Christian army's entry into the fort. Sulaiman and Abdullah on the other hand captured important central cities and provinces. The Christians launched a massive attack on northern Spain and ravaged it. Spain was about to slip out of Muslim hands.

### **Defensive Measures of Hakam**

Sultan Hakam bin Hisham, first of all, took action against Toledo and besieged it. Abdullah rose in defense. Hakam was still engaged there when he heard of the Christian invasion of Spain. Considering the Christian attack more dangerous he raised his siege of Toledo and rushed to the north. Having heard of Hakam's arrival Charlemagne's forces vacated Barcelona and its suburbs in haste and made no halt until they reached France. Sultan Hakam then turned to Huesca and Lerida but the Christian forces fled the territory. Hakam after getting the Christians out of Spain marched ahead and ravaged the southern part of France and wrested Narbonne from the Christians. Having heard of Hakam's engagement in France Abdullah and Sulaiman began dislodging Hakam's Governors and occupying Spanish cities. The two brothers marched ahead conquering city after city and met at the river Tagus. At this point, they discontinued their march. They began to wait for the consequences of Hakam's campaigns in France. They had a plan to occupy all of Spain in case Hakam was killed in France. Hakam's Governors were also waiting restlessly the result of his hasty invasion of France. They were mentally prepared to obey Sulaiman and Abdullah in case Hakam was killed in France for; after all, they were the sons of Abdur Rahman. But awe-stricken and frightened French forces, instead of facing Hakam took to their heels everywhere. Hakam returned to Spain to face his enemies in Spain instead of consolidating his position in the occupied territories of France.

### **End of Sulaiman and Abdullah**

Making Ubaidah bin Umairah the Governor of Toledo Sulaiman and Abdullah moved ahead to stop Hakam on the way. Hakam's triumphant march had already frustrated their ambition. They faced defeat and fled to the eastern mountain range of Spain. Sultan Hakam

deputed his Commander Amr bin Yusuf to besiege Toledo and he himself marched in pursuit of Sulaiman and Abdullah. After several months of hide-and-seek campaigns, they came face to face on the plane of Murcia. During fierce fighting, an arrow hit Sulaiman and he dropped dead on the spot. With the end of Sulaiman, his forces fled the field along with Abdullah who took refuge in Valencia and sought forgiveness from Hakam. Granting the petition of his uncle immediately Hakam asked him to send his sons Asbah and Qasim as ransom and go to Tabkhiv in Morocco to settle there. Abdullah carried out the conditions without loss of time. Hakam treated both his cousins with love. He married his daughter to the elder and appointed the younger as the Governor of Merida city. At a time when Sultan Hakam was chasing Sulaiman and Abdullah, Umar bin Yusuf conquered Toledo and killed Ubaidah bin Umayr. He later made his son Yusuf bin Umar the Governor of Toledo and appeared before the Sultan with the head of Ubaidah. Following this Saragossa rose in revolt. Umar bin Yusuf went there and punished the insurgents. The series of revolts, which started in 181 A. H., came to an end in 184 A. H. and peace and safety prevailed over the whole of Spain.

### **An Organized Conspiracy of the Christians**

It has already been mentioned that the Christian forces could not withstand Hakam's invasion of France and fled for safety. Three years of Hakam's engagements with his insurgent relatives offered the Christians an opportunity to look into their weaknesses and find out ways and means of guarding themselves against Muslim invasions in the future. They had the state of Asturias in the western part of the Pyrenees joining the border of France, Galicia and the Bay of Biscay, another very strong State that was founded by the chiefs of the Goths after their expulsion from Spain. A large part of France was ruled over by Charlemagne. Moreover, rebellious Christians dominated the population of Barcelona, Aragon, Catalonia, and Galicia.

Finding Sultan Hakam preoccupied with the task of putting down internal rebellions the Christians held a large scale consultative meeting in Talur city. As a result of these deliberations, a massive united front came into being against the Muslims. Waves of peace and

friendship rose to bring together Christian rulers who had been opposing one another.

### **New State Founded against the Muslims**

Charlemagne, the King of France formed a small State on a piece of land in the south France and appointed a chief named Borrell as its ruler. The State was named "Gothic March" and one of their chiefs was appointed as the ruler with the instruction that he should make the Pyrenees impossible to pass for the Muslims and keep ever ready to stop any advancing march. Strong forts were built at different places at the foot of the Pyrenees and friendly relations with the Governors of northern Spain were established with a view to set them against their ruler. The Caliph of Baghdad was kept informed of their intentions and preparations and Caliph Harun Rasheed also showed encouraging friendly gestures by sending them precious gifts. The new Gothic State also occupied the eastern and southern parts of the Pyrenees and the Christians of northern Spain extended all help and facilities. In short, "Gothic March" rose as a strong State on the pattern of Asturias and the bishops declared all-out help and support to it a religious obligation. Disgruntled Christians from various States came to settle in the new State and this deserted territory turned into a strong, well-populated and splendid piece of land.

### **Treacherous Muslim Governors encouraged**

Hakam had hardly won peace during the last days of 184 A.H. when the Christians stormed northern Spain in 185 A.H. And at such a crucial moment, the Governors of the northern cities lent support to Charlemagne considering him a friend and ally of the Caliph of Baghdad. Moreover, the spies employed in Spain by the court of Baghdad played a very active role in setting the governors against Sultan Hakam who refused to obey Hakam and accepted the King of France as their ruler.

Similarly, the Governors of Galicia and Biscay including the ruler of Saragossa declared their allegiance to the Christian rulers and rose against Hakam. But, despite these disturbances Sultan Hakam did not move from Cordova for the atmosphere in the capital was not at all

peaceful. However, he sent his commander Ibrahim to save the northern part of the country. Ibrahim invaded Galicia and Saragossa first and wrested the territories after fierce fighting. The rebel governors fled to Charlemagne along with the Christian forces and common people and persuaded him to invade Spain. Encouraged by the Muslim governors, consultations were held in France. It was decided that the port of Barcelona should also be annexed to the "Gothic March" State. The Governor of Barcelona, Zaid was already in correspondence with King Charlemagne and Count Louis and had offered his allegiance to them. Thus, in 188 A.H., Christian forces along with the troops of Gothic March reached Barcelona plundering the northeastern parts of Spain. But Zaid shut the doors and refused to hand over Barcelona to the Christians. Thereupon, the Christian forces laid a siege around Barcelona and tightened it gradually. Since Zaid received no help from any quarter, the Christians occupied Barcelona on the condition that the Muslim population would be allowed to vacate the territory safely. A Christian Governor took over the Governorship of the city. The newly conquered territory became a part of the Gothic March State. Now the Islamic forces had to face two fronts in northern Spain, the State of Asturias and Galicia on one hand and the Gothic March and Barcelona on the other. Both the fronts were receiving help from France.

In 189 A.H., rebel Muslim Governors of Spain persuaded the Christians to invade Toledo. The Christians marched from Barcelona and the northern cities to Toledo. Yusuf bin Umar attempted to defend the city. They, at last, surrounded Toledo. The Christian population of Toledo city and its suburbs extended all help and facilities to arrest Yusuf bin Umar and capture Toledo. When the news of the fall of Toledo reached Umar bin Yusuf, the father of Yusuf bin Umar, he marched from Saragossa to Toledo and conquered it and he freed Yusuf driving away the Christians. Although the Christians of Toledo deserved heavy punishment from Umar bin Yusuf, he, in view of the demand of the situation, accepted their excuses and restored peace to them.

### **Causes of Opposition to Hakam**

Sultan Hakam was a brave young man but right from the day he came to the throne he remained engaged in constant fighting. Some parts of

Spain slipped out of his hands. The Christians were getting stronger and the Muslims were losing ground. Hakam's relatives, on the other hand, left no stone unturned in opposing him militarily. They resorted to secret planning and instigating the Christians against Hakam. Moreover, the Christian world had become united to weaken the Muslim rule. The antagonistic activities of the Abbasids were encouraging Hakam's relatives and the hostile Christians at the same time against him. The religious scholars and guides of the Malik School had also turned against Hakam. They were quite influential during the period of Hisham but Hakam had cut them down to size. Since they still had their influence over the masses their criticism of Hakam's style of governance made an important difference. They started issuing verdicts against Hakam and he could not withstand their onslaught. All these factors jointly made the hostile Christians very bold and strong enough to make a challenge to the Muslim rule in Spain.

The religious leaders decided to carry out their plans in 190 A.H. The Chief Justice, Yahya bin Yahya and the jurist Talut assembled and held consultations regarding the deposition of Hakam. Following this, a deputation headed by Yahya called on Qasim bin Abdullah, the cousin and son-in-law of Hakam and expressed the desire to bring him to the throne of Spain. Qasim asked them to let him know the names of those whose support could be relied upon. He then asked them to turn up the next day with the list of such powerful and reliable persons who would be able to depose Hakam. Qadi Yahya, along with his party went to Qasim bin Abdullah who had already had Sultan Hakam hiding behind a screen. When Qadi Yahya began to dictate the names to the clerk of Qasim. The clerk of Hakam also began to write down those names sitting beside Hakam. Since Hakam's clerk was afraid of the revelation of his own name, he was simply running his pen on the paper without writing anything. But the pen began to produce a writing sound. Thus with the very thought that somebody else was also writing down those names behind the screen they started leaving the room one by one. But many of them were caught and killed. Following this, the opponents raised their standard of revolt openly. They lived in localities towards the south of

the river Guadalquivir (Wadi al-Kabir). They surrounded the palace of Sultan Hakam but Hakam put down the revolt after a short and bloody encounter.

The same year, in 190 A.H. Sultan Hakam established peaceful and friendly relations with the newly formed sovereign Idrisid State in Morocco. Thus, the freedom of the Idrisid rule from the Baghdad caliphate proved a blessing for Spain and Sultan Hakam made no delay in extending the hand of friendship towards the Moroccan rule. Shortly after curtailing the influence of the religious leaders of Cordova and forming friendly relations with the Moroccan rule, Sultan Hakam turned to the northern provinces.

### **Eradication of Rebels**

After a good deal of thinking Sultan Hakam arrived at the conclusion that Toledo was the center of all the Christian conspiracies. Because of being strong and tumultuous, the Christians of Toledo had become the focus of Christian as well as Muslim attention. Sultan Hakam held consultations with Umar bin Yusuf and as per his advice, he replaced his son Yusuf bin Umar in Toledo. Taking over the administration of Toledo Umar bin Yusuf began to show favor and kindness to the people of Toledo. After winning their confidence, the new Governor told some of the nobles that the Umayyad dynasty must be dislodged from power. The people of Toledo expressed great joy at this and promised their whole-hearted support to the plan. After knowing the minds of the citizens, Umar suggested the construction of a strong fort adjoining Toledo as the first step in the way of destroying the Umayyad rule. With control of such a fort, Sultan Hakam would not be able to besiege Toledo. This proposal added much to the jubilation of the people and they contributed largely to the fund. Shortly after the construction of the fort, the frontier Governor, according to their plan, sought military help from Sultan Hakam against Christian threats. Hakam sent his son Abdur Rahman at the head of a huge army. When the force reached Toledo, Umar bin Yusuf came out to greet it and had the prince stay in the new fort as an honorable guest. Umar asked the people of Toledo to show their hospitality to Abdur Rahman, the crown prince to win his heart and make him careless

about them. They liked the suggestion, and all those who were willing to put an end to the Umayyad dynasty sought permission to appear before the crown prince to offer their salutation. The prince granted them permission with pleasure and called them all at a fixed time. When all the corrupt elements entered the fort, they were all caught and put to death. Their corpses were thrown into a trench dug for this purpose, which was leveled with earth. In this way, all sorts of disorder and disturbances came to an end in Toledo. Others also lost heart in making a revolt in view of the consequences of these antagonists.

### **Skirmishes with the Christians**

After getting rid of the hostile elements in Toledo, Hakam sent a small company against the Christians who were in occupation of northern Spain up to Barcelona. He did not choose to launch any forceful attack with the result that fighting between the Muslims and the Christians lingered on for seven or eight years. During this period, both the parties tasted victories. Hakam by this way provided the Christians of Gothic March, Asturias and Galicia an opportunity to vent their desire for military exercises on the battlefield with a minimized impact. He could not use another strategy because he could not trust the people of Spain.

### **Fresh Recruiting Drive**

During this period Sultan Hakam made concerted efforts to build a strong military force. He, very cautiously, recruited those Christians who had settled in the southern territories of Spain and had nothing to do with the insurgent Christians of the north. Thus, the Christians of the south were considered more loyal and reliable than the Muslims of doubtful nature. Since the recruited Christian forces were not enough to keep the entire of Spain under control and crush the insurgents, he started purchasing slaves and prisoners from Abyssinia, Middle Africa, Asia Minor and other Asian countries. Now he had a strong slave-based force. Since Arabic was unknown to these soldiers they were called non-Arab and they knew nothing except to obey and fight for their master and ruler. They could neither establish friendly relations with others nor enter into any secret planning against the



administration. Sultan Hakam was the first ruler to devise such a means to keep his rule safe and strong. Later, the Ayyubid dynasty followed in the footsteps of Hakam and in this way the Mamluks of Egypt founded a strong rule. Being satisfied with the performance and fighting capabilities of the newly built force Sultan Hakam turned to dealing with the insurgent Christians of the northern territories and invaded the French. However, internal insurgencies had not yet ended.

Asbah bin Abdullah, the ruler of Merida, led by some misunderstanding, took up arms against Hakam. Asbah bin Abdullah was the cousin and brother-in-law of Sultan Hakam. Hakam himself rose to face the offence and arrested him but Hakam's sister removed the misunderstanding and gained liberty for her husband. He was then forgiven and allowed to live in Cordova.

### **Malkites' Opposition**

The Maliki religious scholars raised their heads once again in 198 A.H. When the Sultan began to build his force out of the Christians and the non-Arabs, the Muslim religious leaders began to issue verdicts against the new policy of the Sultan and held it a curse on Cordova. The last conspiracy against Hakam was hatched under the leadership of Qadi Yahya. Since the people of Spain held him in high esteem, Hakam neither charged nor punished him. But he did not mend his ways and kept misleading the Muslim religious leaders and their followers against the administration with the result the people of Cordova hated the non-Arabs and would kill them if one were found alone.

### **Flames of Antagonism reach the Royal Palace**

One day a non-Arab came into a clash with a Malkite supporter. With this news, all the Malkites living across Guadalquivir (Wadi al-Kabir) sprang into action and raided the royal palace and pronounced the deposition of the Sultan. They broke into the gates and advanced up to the threshold killing the bodyguards. The entire palace was engulfed in strife and panic. In such a turbulent state, the Sultan called out to his servant Hasan and asked him to bring perfumed hair oil. After Hakam had applied the oil to his head, the servant mustered enough courage to ask him the reason for applying hair oil in such a

violent and disorderly situation. The Sultan replied, "Foolish one had I not used oil how could the rebels have known that it was the head of a king while cutting it off?"

## **Hakam's Presence of Mind**

Historians have quoted this narrative to establish the firmness of his mind in such a treacherous situation. He then called his cousin Asbah and ordered him to go out and set the southern locality on fire. Asbah left the siege and sent word to a military camp of Cordova to go to the southern locality fully armed and set fire to that locality. Meanwhile a force from the military camp arrived at the scene. When the insurgents besieging the royal palace noticed flames and columns of smoke rising from their locality, they rushed to save their burning houses. Taking advantage of the situation Sultan Hakam hurried to the spot at the head of his bodyguards, while Asbah bin Abdullah joined him from another side and put many of them to the sword. Following a large-scale massacre, he ordered the killing to stop and start catching the culprits. The Royal forces from other camps also appeared on the scene and captured thousands of rebels.

## **Exile of Malkites**

Taking stock of the situation Sultan Hakam issued orders for the Malkites to leave the territories of Cordova and its suburbs. However, the Sultan pardoned Qadi Yahya for his faults once again with the purpose of benefiting from his wide knowledge and erudition. It looked rather strange that Qadi Yahya was allowed to join the royal court and become Hakam's trusted adviser. About eight thousand exiled Malkites having wives and children with them showed an interest in going to Morocco to settle there. The ruler of Morocco, Idris welcomed them to settle in the city of Fez and add to its beauty. Fifteen thousand of them reached Alexandria (Egypt) on board ship and occupied the territory but they were driven away from there too. They later occupied Carat Island and founded their rule, which lasted for about a century.

Hazm bin Wahab revolted in Beja but was defeated and he sought forgiveness and Sultan Hakam pardoned him.

## **Invasion of France**

Twenty years had passed since Hakam's enthronement and the whole period had been spent in putting down revolts and he could not, therefore, find time to invade the Christians. Finding the situation relatively peaceful, Sultan Hakam sent a force headed by Abdul Karim towards the north to attack the Christians. He led the force straight to France and took it by storm. The expedition was dispatched to France in 200 A.H. Sultan Hakam and his commanders had committed a blunder by keeping their invasions confined to Charlemagne's armies. They almost always ignored the Gothic March and never tried to wipe it out or reduce its size. They remained satisfied with the submissive attitude of the newly formed Christian State. They so often invaded France to gain permanent peace by subjugating it to their rule. Moreover, the hilly States also created trouble for Sultan Hakam by joining hands with the king of France. Had he put an end to the two hilly States (Asturias and Gothic March) Spain would have remained peaceful.

It was during the tenure of Sultan Hakam that a bishop of Asturias informed the people that the grave of St. James was in the forest bordering Galicia province and he was given a sign of the grave in a dream by a saint. Following this, the ruler of Asturias built a church at that site. This church became a place of pilgrimage not only for the Christians of Galicia but also from far away places of Europe. Gradually it became a populated city and seat of power and brought the whole of Galicia under its influence.

A few years later, Commander Abdul Karim returned from France safe and sound. His campaign was successful and the French were thoroughly punished and beaten. But nothing was done against the States of Gothic March and Asturias. The Muslims conquered France more than once but no Arab Commander ever agreed to settle in France because of its cold climate. They remained satisfied with what they captured as spoils of war and what they received in the form of tribute from the wealthy sections of the country.

## **Disasters of Famine and Drought**

Sultan Hakam enjoyed a period of peace and order after 203 A.H. because there was no serious force to invade Spain or to create disorder and disturbances in the country. However, at the time when everything seemed all right, famine and drought overtook Spain. The famine proved utterly disastrous and distressing and the afflicted part of the country was overwhelmed by a spell of theft and armed robbery. Sultan Hakam faced the situation with his usual courage and determination. He opened houses for the destitute in every city and town and arranged food supplies from abroad. He also deployed special police and military squads to keep the situation under control. In most cases, Hakam himself rose to silence the disturbing elements. In short, he served his people so kindly and gracefully during the terrible famine that they began to love him, and the waves of hate raised by the Muslim religious leaders against him subsided.

## **Death of Hakam**

Sultan Hakam is so often described as a man of the sword and a bloodthirsty Muslim ruler. He killed many, no doubt, but it is an undeniable fact that they all deserved nothing but death. Sultan Hakam died on 25 Dhul Qada 206 A.H. at the age of 52 years and some months and left behind twenty sons and twenty daughters. His son Abdur Rahman II succeeded him.

## **Assessment of Hakam's Character**

Sultan Hakam was brave, benevolent and far-sighted. He was an enemy of the hypocrites and subversives but he was very generous and gracious to his friends. He valued religious scholars and spiritual leaders highly and was a great patron of the poets. He remained firm and determined on the battlefield and forgave faults whenever he expected something good from it. He was a great and magnificent king of Spain. His devotion and sense of divinity can be judged from the fact that once, in a state of violent anger he ordered the amputation of his servant's hand. Ziyad bin Abdur Rahman, a great scholar came in and said addressing Sultan Hakam "Malik bin Anas

has narrated from the Prophet ﷺ that whoever controls himself in a state of violent anger will be given peace by Allah Almighty on the Day of Judgment". As these words were uttered, the Sultan's wrath disappeared and the servant was forgiven.

Sultan Hakam's 27-year reign was fraught with strife, turbulence and insurrection. He boldly faced these situations, which were not of his own creation. Had there been on the throne of Spain a man of unstable mind and infirm determination the Umayyad dynasty would have been wiped out of Spain.

### **Abdur Rahman II**

Sultan Abdur Rahman II was born in Toledo in Shaban 176 A.H. and succeeded his father in 206 A.H. At the time of his accession, there was an atmosphere of peace on the surface but he had to deal with internal disturbances created by his own relatives.

### **Opposition from Family Members**

As already mentioned, Abdullah, the uncle of Sultan Hakam had settled in Morocco. Although old at the time of the demise of Sultan Hakam, he reached Spain and proclaimed himself as the ruler of the country. Abdullah's three sons were then the governors of three different provinces of Spain. He had therefore, expected active support from his sons but that was his sheer folly. Royal forces took on Abdullah who fled to Valencia after being beaten thoroughly. His sons sided with Abdur Rahman II and asked his father not to oppose the Sultan any more. At last Abdullah sought forgiveness from his grandson Abdur Rahman II, who not only pardoned him but appointed him as the ruler of Murcia where he died after ruling for three or four years.

### **Ali bin Nafe honored**

In 206 A.H., the very first year of Abdur Rahman's accession, Ali bin Nafe, the disciple of Ibrahim Musali and known as Farabi came to Spain. He was well versed in music and was an erudite scholar of Arabic disciplines. Sultan Hakam had invited him to visit Spain for he was not given proper recognition in Syria and Iraq. But the Sultan had

died before Ali bin Nafe reached Spain. When Sultan Abdur Rahman II became aware of the standing invitation, he issued orders to all his Governors to accord a fitting ovation to the visiting guest of honor and present him slaves, horses and precious gifts. Thus, the well renowned scholar and musician arrived in Cordova and became close to the Sultan.

### **Reforms in Mode of Life**

Ali bin Nafe brought about many strange reforms in the life style and mode of living which gained wide popularity very quickly. With his efforts, water pipes were set up all over Cordova and then in other cities of Spain. He also originated many sumptuous foods and fashionable garments. His inventions and creations became popular not only in Spain but found popularity with the Europeans as well. Eating with a knife and fork is one of his inventions and the Europeans learned it from the Muslims of Spain. Even though Ali bin Nafe was very close to the Sultan, he never interfered in political affairs. He kept his attention exclusively focused on reforms in the mode of living. Due to this position, he had no one oppose him. The people of Spain learned from him not only the ways and modes of living but music too. In other words, Ali bin Nafe made an all out effort to change the martial life of the Muslims of Spain into pleasure-loving Muslims fond of a luxurious life.

### **Progress of Malkite School of thought in Spain**

It has already been mentioned that Qadi Yahya bin Yahya Maliki had launched a very serious revolt in Cordova during the rule of Hakam. As a result of which one-fifth of the southern locality had become under populated because twenty to twenty five thousand people were exiled from Spain. Later the Qadi joined the courtiers and advisers of Sultan Hakam. Following the accession of Sultan Abdur Rahman II he had been so close to him that he once offered him the post of Chief Justice but the latter refused to accept it, with the result that he was considered higher than the Chief Justice. The people of Spain were immensely devoted to him and he had the last word on religious matters. The Qadi had penned a large number of books and had the

distinction of being the student of Imam Malik. He learned Islamic sciences from the Imam for some years. During the rule of Sultan Abdur Rahman, he brought about the complete change in his style and function. He was now making full use of his abilities. His recommendations and intercessions were never rejected. As a result of this, all those religious scholars who wanted a post in the judiciary would bring Malkite doctrine into practice resulting in the influence of the doctrine all over Spain. Since Sultan Abdur Rahman II was deeply involved in the political and administrative affairs of his country, he had gained a lot of experience and was able to take cautious steps in the matters related to the religious scholars and spiritual leaders.

### **Rebellion Curbed**

At the time of the accession of Abdur Rahman II the entire northern territory of Spain including the southern coast of the Bay of Biscay and the southern foot of the Pyrenees were under the occupation of the Christians. But all these Christian chiefs paid tribute to the Islamic State and accepted the supremacy of the Cordova court, which was satisfied with that much. Barcelona too was under the possession of the Christians and a Viceroy of the Gothic March State ruled there. A part of the eastern and northern coast of Spain was under the occupation of the Christians. Asturias State had now stretched up to Leon and Galicia and the new city of Castile had become its capital. Although the Muslims did not want to do away with this State, they followed a policy of keeping it terrified so that it would never be able to invade Spain with the support of France. The city of Ilibira lay to the north where the Governor was appointed by Cordova.

When the governor of Ilibira committed atrocities on the people and entered into secret planning with the Christians, Sultan Hakam had him killed and seized his possessions. However, a short time after Sultan Hakam passed away, on the accession of Abdur Rahman II the frontier Christians drove the force and the people back to Cordova. They made a demand for all their seized possessions saying that they all belonged to the people, which were forcibly taken by the governor killed by Hakam. These people rose to protest at the gate of the royal palace of Cordova in 207 A.H. Royal guards were sent to punish them

with the result that many of them fell fighting and the rest fled for safety. In this way, the Christians made an opportunity to create more disturbances on the borders.

The same year, 207 A.H. Modaria and Yamania, two Arab tribes clashed in Tadmir. Royal forces were sent to keep peace. On the return of the royal forces, they again resumed fighting, and once again the royal forces were sent. Their fighting lingered on for about 7 years. The Arab character of the days of Ignorance once again came to the fore. In 208 A.H., the Christian States of Asturias and Galicia refused to pay tribute and rose in open revolt. They later made inroads into Islamic territories and plundered some cities. Sultan Abdur Rahman II sent his renowned commander Abdul Karim bin Abdul Wahid bin Mughith at the head of an army and he drove the Christians away after beating them repeatedly. Abdul Karim pulled down Christian forts and forced them to obey and resume paying tribute to the Islamic State. After attaining success in his mission, Abdul Karim came back. Again, the same force under the same Commander was dispatched to Barcelona from where news of war preparations was received. The Royal Army conquered the entire territory and forced the enemy to flee to the hills. However, the conquered territory was restored to them after their total submission.

### **Emissary of the Caesar of Constantinople**

In 209 A.H., an emissary from the Caesar of Constantinople called on Abdur Rahman II to establish friendly relations with Spain. Baghdad already had cordial relations with France and the latter was constantly persuaded to invade Spain. Cordova knew it well.

Constantinople was under constant attack and had, therefore, sought the friendship of the Sultan of Spain because of his courage and bravery. Sultan Abdur Rahman was naturally sympathetic to Constantinople for Caesar was an enemy of Baghdad. Abdur Rahman accorded a warm welcome to the envoy from Constantinople. The envoy presented him precious gifts and tried his utmost to convince Abdur Rahman that he with a massive military power at his back would be able to take back the lost territories of Syria, Iraq, and Arabia from the Abbasids. Abdur Rahman acted very wisely and



promised that he could help Caesar only when he was having peace at home. However, he sent back the envoy with many precious gifts along with his emissary, Yahya Ghazalah.

### **Abdur Rahman's Sense of Islamic Honor**

Yahya al-Ghazalah went to Constantinople and inspected everything carefully and returned after assuring Caesar of Abdur Rahman's friendship. But, in fact, Sultan Abdur Rahman was not in favor of helping a Christian ruler against a Muslim Caliph. Although a little military and monetary help to Caesar could not make any difference to Abdur Rahman II but his sense of Islamic honor did not allow him to do so.

### **Portuguese Revolt**

The same year the Christians of the southwest territories of Spain, now called Portugal rose in revolt under the leadership of the people of Merida city. Ubaidullah bin Abdullah was sent to punish the rebels who returned in 210 A.H. after beating them and pulling down their fortifications. They again raised their heads and Ubaidullah had to go there once again to bring the situation under control. Behind these revolts were the clergymen who would come from Galicia and Castillia to generate hostile feeling among the citizens. The Christian priests knew well that their advantage lay in internal troubles and infighting among the Muslims. The People of Merida were crossing all limits in their hostile moves against the Muslim rule. They had expelled the Governor from the city and had fought with the Royal forces twice. When Sultan Abdur Rahman ordered to throw the stones of the demolished fortifications of Merida into the river, the people once again rose in revolt, expelled the Governor again and seized the city. They rebuilt the fortifications and readied themselves against attacks. It is amazing that the Muslims formed the greater part of the insurgents and Mahmud bin Abdul Jabbar, a Muslim was their head. Royal Commanders repeatedly advanced into their territory but failed to eradicate the hostile activities.

At last, Sultan Abdur Rahman himself led his army against Merida in 218 A.H. No sooner had he besieged the city when he had to return to

Cordova. However, the city was conquered in 221 A.H. and a governor was sent there. The revolt of the people of Merida was the worst ever in Spain. The city had forty thousand armed warriors and received help from Asturias and Galicia. After the conquest of the city in 220 A.H. Mahmud bin Abdul Jabbar fled Merida to take refuge in the state of Asturias where he died serving as the garrison commander.

There were two main causes that set the Christians against the Muslims. First, the Christian wives of the Muslims who were left free to practice their faith and second, the Christians of the northern States who were supposed to be sympathetic to the Muslims and who had free access to Muslim circles could propagate their faith easily and openly. It was once rumored that the new tax imposed by Sultan Abdur Rahman II in addition to *Zakat* was an attempt on his part to capture the public's wealth and property. This poisonous propaganda enraged the Muslims and this rage and dissatisfaction led to the worst consequences.

### **Revolt in Toledo**

Since the curbing of revolts in Merida took time and the Muslim rebels had put the royal force to much difficulty, antagonistic elements once again began to raise their heads. Toledo, where the Christians were in majority, took up arms under the leadership of Hashim Zarab, and the Muslims joined them as well. They jointly expelled the governor and consolidated their position in Toledo. Seeing Hashim in a commanding position another frontier Governor Muhammad bin Wasim also joined him. Sultan Abdur Rahman II sent his son Umayyah at the head of a huge army but his campaign proved fruitless. Umayyah came out of Toledo and the retreating Royal Force clashed with the rebels. The Royal force lay in ambush and when the people of Toledo passed through the area the Royal Force launched a surprise attack and they after incurring heavy losses, fled back to Toledo and took refuge in their fort. The city however, could not be conquered despite repeated sieges.

At last, Sultan Abdur Rahman sent his brother Waleed in 222 A.H. at the head of a huge army. Waleed laid siege around Toledo and cut off all supplies, with the result the people of Toledo laid down their arms. Hashim Zarab died in the action and Muhammad bin Wasim fled into

the city. He collected a group of insurgents and occupied Toledo after a surprise attack on the city.

In 224 A.H., Sultan Abdur Rahman himself marched on Toledo at the head of forty thousand troops, invaded Toledo, punished the rebels with a heavy hand and brought peace. From there, he sent a force headed by Ubaidullah bin Abdullah to Alva and Alcala. He punished the insurgent Christians and forced them to obey. Ubaidullah had not yet completed his mission in the northern territories when the French army on the borders made inroads into the city of Salem in the Islamic State and plundered it. Ubaidullah took the Governor of the territory with him and attacked the Christian forces and beat back Larziq, their commander and the King of France.

In 225 A.H., Sultan Abdur Rahman II invaded Galicia and forced them to obey. He also came down heavily on the Christians of Asturias State, had them obey and pay tribute. He then set up his military camp inside the State of Asturias and dispatched his forces to France both from the land and sea routes. After accomplishing his military missions, Abdur Rahman returned to Cordova with a large amount of booty and prisoners of war.

### **The Next Emissary of Caesar of Constantinople**

The same year the Caesar of Constantinople sent another emissary to Cordova of the same nature as was sent in the past. Abdur Rahman welcomed them as warmly as he had done in the past. This time the Caesar of Constantinople was under tremendous pressure from the Caliph of Baghdad and very insistently sought help from Abdur Rahman and had very high expectations. Possibly, Abdur Rahman II could have extended help to Constantinople but, during the same period, the Normans of Northern Europe who still worshiped fire and idols and were not yet Christians had made inroads into southwestern Spain. They had left Germany in their boats and reached the Spanish coast by crossing the English Channel. Sultan Abdur Rahman II dispatched his forces from the land route and sent orders to the ports of the eastern coast to send warships towards the Strait of Gibraltar so that the invading warships would be seized and the escaping enemy soldiers blocked. When the Norman invaders found out about the

movement of the fifteen warships to block their route they retreated in their boats.

### **The Revolt of Commander Musa bin Musa**

Close on the heels of the end of the Norman raid Musa bin Musa, the renowned Commander of Abdur Rahman II guarding the northern frontiers revolted and joined the Christian camp. Harth bin Badi'a was sent to punish him. Musa bin Musa came out along with the Christian force to attack on the Royal Force. But Harth defeated and drove him away. Musa stayed in Toledo while Harth halted at Saragossa. After a long-drawn battle, Musa left Toledo and shifted position and Harth occupied Toledo. Following this, the Christian King Garcia came to reinforce Musa's troops, which gave rise to new encounters. At Alva Harth was captured and sent to the King of France in 218 A.H. Abdur Rahman was terribly shocked at this news. He sent his son Mundhir at the head of a strong army. By that time, Musa had seized Toledo. Mundhir killed the ruler of Navarre in a battle in 229 A.H. who had come to help Musa. Musa sent his son as a hostage for gaining peace. Mundhir granted peace and appointed Musa as the ruler of Toledo.

### **Revolt of the Christians of the Northern Frontier**

In the presence of the disturbances on the northern frontiers the Christians of the northeast started large-scale preparations to rise in revolt. The people of Barcelona made inroads into the Islamic territory and began to plunder it. Killing many Islamic forces they advanced towards southwestern areas. Sultan Abdur Rahman II sent his famous Commander Abdul Karim bin Abdul Wahid bin Mugith to Barcelona in 231 A.H. Abdul Karim cracked down on the rebels of Barcelona and its suburbs and ravaged the Spanish March State, but restored it to them after obtaining their submission. He then advanced into French territories and stormed all the areas up to Gerona but the Islamic forces did not stay in France for long and returned after a tremendous show of force.

The Christians and the enemies of the Umayyads tasted defeat despite all their secret planning. When all the uprisings subsided and normalcy returned, the Christians of France and the northern frontier

States of Spain called a meeting to ponder over the prevailing situation. The clergy of Galicia took it upon themselves to keep the frontiers safe from the onslaughts of Cordova. They did this so that the Christian countries could find time enough to make joint efforts in military preparations, building forts, bringing the northern Governors to their side and striking at the Islamic State to bring about its end. This attempt was declared a religious struggle. A very zealous bishop was deputed to arouse among the Christians of Cordova and other cities a sense of sacrifice and the faith of Christ. The Muslims of Spain had conferred on the Christians complete liberty of practicing and preaching their faith. Religious matters were examined and decided by Christian judges and church expenditures were met by the royal treasury. Muslims and Christians took part in one another's festivals and both peoples had equal rights in commercial and agricultural spheres and there was no material reason to set the Christians against the Muslims.

### **Fresh Mischief of Christians of South Spain**

Nevertheless the Christians of the northern part and their supporters had spread into the south of Spain. They had made it a practice to abuse Muhammad (ﷺ) openly in markets and public gatherings. They also put the Qur'an to disgrace and created among the Muslims a deep sense of provocation. At first, some of the foul-mouthed Christians were arrested and produced in the court of law. But there too they uttered blasphemous words. When one was put to death, another one appeared in the law court and abused the Prophet of Islam and also met his doom. It was discovered that these Christians would come to the courts only to have a sacred death and dignity among men of their faith. After meeting such a death, they were supposed to have received a very lofty spiritual status and their graves were made a place of worship, deep love and respect. In view of this, the Sultan and the Qadi took to overlooking and forgiving their faults. However, Sultan Abdur Rahman was in a fix and could not find a way out. Finally, the bishops, distinguished Christian leaders and the clergy of Cordova and Seville convened a huge religious assembly. The issue discussed was whether abusing the Prophet of Islam and desecrating the Qur'an was an act of reward in

Christianity and should those laying down their lives in this manner be taken as martyrs or not. Bishops and priests made fervid speeches on the topic and declared such an act totally against the Christian faith and principles. However, in a strange decision, it was announced that those who already had been killed must be considered as martyred but those killed in future would be taken as offenders committing a major sin. The decision taken by the council impressed the Spanish Christians. But the clergies of the northern States who thought they had attained a high spiritual position by this device did not abandon their practice. The Muslims were growing opposed to the Sultan for his soft attitude towards the offending Christians, with the result they were encouraged to revolt. The illiterate section of the Christians started reproaching their religious leaders who had declared the Christian martyrs offenders. In the wake of all this, the cordial relations between the Muslims and the Christians began to deteriorate.

### **Death of Abdur Rahman**

Abdur Rahman II died in Rabia al-Thani 238 A.H. after ruling for thirty-one years and some months and his son succeeded him.

### **Assessment of Abdur Rahman's Rule**

Although Sultan Abdur Rahman's reign was not free from fighting and disturbances he never neglected the welfare of his subjects and other progressive works including the arts and literature. Abdur Rahman was an erudite scholar, philosopher and well versed in the Islamic sciences. He added a number of new chambers to the Cordova Mosque and constructed many other mosques, bridges, forts, citadels, and new roads. He provided many other facilities for the spread of education and left no town and village without a madrasa (school). In every city and town, he built magnificent buildings for the Governors and Magistrates to run their administration and also constructed public bathrooms everywhere.

Sultan Abdur Rahman II was very fond of adornment and magnificence. He seldom appeared before the public but was very kind and merciful. He was not inclined to use harsh punishment and killing. During his tenure, the public treasury had become much

richer. He brought more beautiful coins to the public and planted some fruit gardens on both sides of the river Guadalquivir (Wadi al Kabir near Cordova) and made them a public trust. He had books of Greek philosophy translated and set up academic councils. Locust swarms once ate up all the crops and failure of rain brought famine to vast areas of the country. The Sultan extended immense help to the masses and made it a practice to purchase large quantities of food with funds from the royal treasury to be kept in stock for such eventualities.

### Heir Apparent

Sultan Abdur Rahman had a wife named Tarub whom he loved. She bore a son for the Sultan and had a desire that her son Abdullah be declared crown prince. But his son Muhammad was more deserving because of his intellectual and spiritual qualities. She had once attempted to his murder him. In order to carry out her plot against Muhammad she took a, *kha'ja sara*, eunuch, named Nasr into her confidence who contacted the court physician who was treating Muhammad. He was attracted by the lure of large profits to mix poison with Muhammad's medicine. The royal physician outwardly agreed but informed the Sultan of the secret planning. When the cup of poison was brought, the Sultan asked Nasr to drink it. He drank it and died on the spot. Thus, he fell in the ditch he had dug for Muhammad. A few days after Sultan Abdur Rahman passed away, Prince Muhammad came to the throne with the support of the Royal Guards. Land revenue during the period of Abdur Rahman I amounted to three hundred thousand dinars, which reached up to six hundred thousand dinars however, the total amount of revenue came to one million dinars during the reign of Abdur Rahman II. The total income was divided into three parts; one part was spent on the salaries of the armed forces, another on the salaries of the officials and courtiers and the third was deposited in the royal treasury to be spent on public welfare and construction works. Abdur Rahman II had added to his revenue by taxing the merchandise and this action of his turned the people against him.

It is said that the number of Abdur Rahman's children was more than a hundred. His people called him "al-Muzaffar" (the victorious). He

was wheat-complexioned, long-bearded and a tall person with deep eyes. He colored his beard with henna. 45 of his sons were alive when he died.

During the rule of Abdur Rahman II Christians were appointed as heads of important posts. They generally spoke Arabic and could, therefore, manage administrative affairs well. Thus, the Muslims served as soldiers while official responsibilities were entrusted to the Christians.

### **Accession of Muhammad bin Abdur Rahman II**

During the Rule of Sultan Abdur Rahman II the Christians had dominated administrative affairs. The Muslim Jurists observed these developments rather silently. However, they were annoyed at the growing power and mischief of the Christian officials.

### **Muhammad's First Step**

Succeeding his father in Rabia al-Thani, 238 A.H. Sultan Muhammad began to appoint Muslims in charge of high posts and deposed those Governors and officials unworthy of running the administration well. This first action of Sultan Muhammad was highly appreciated by the Muslim religious scholars and spiritual leaders. During the same period, the Hambali School of thought entered into Spain through those Muslim spiritual leaders who had visited Syria and Arabia during the Hajj (pilgrimage). This started many religious debates and dialectics between the Hambali and Malki spiritual leaders of Cordova. The situation deteriorated to the extent that they were ready to take up arms against one another with the result that Sultan Muhammad bin Abdur Rahman II had to intervene in these disputes and decide the issue. In order to divert their attention from contentious issues, he launched a recruitment drive for  *Jihad*  and a strong army was built and sent to campaign against the northern Christian States.

During this time, the ruler of Asturias or Castile State had seized some Muslim cities. Other Christian rulers were making advances in their own way. The newly built Muslim force was headed by Musa bin



Musa, a Goth who had converted to Islam. Other converts like him were appointed as commanders and governors. But this army achieved almost no success worth mentioning and returned empty-handed. However, the Sultan sent the same force to Barcelona for the Christians there had also overstepped their limit. Also, from there the force came back with very little booty.

## **Rebellions Curbed**

In view of the dominance of the Muslim jurists in Cordova and the killing of the Christians as per the resolution passed by the Christians of the north, the people of Toledo began to make preparations against Muslim rule in 239 A.H. As an initial step, they arrested the Governor of Toledo and sent word to Cordova to send back those made hostages by Sultan Abdur Rahman II otherwise the Governor would be put to death and they would declare their sovereignty.

Sultan Muhammad accepted to their demand and sent the hostages back. However, the people of Toledo instead of adopting the right course according to their promise rose in open revolt considering this kind gesture as a weakness. They fortified Toledo strongly and sought help from the northern Christian States. Strangely, in spite of repeated revolts in Toledo no Muslim king ever thought of demolishing its forts and fortifications. The sole reason was the benevolence of the Muslim rulers, which held them back from such an action against the northern Frontier States.

Sultan Muhammad himself marched in 240 A.H. from Cordova to Toledo at the head of a strong force. Sultan Muhammad had not yet reached Toledo when the forces of Asturias State and warriors from the hills marched into Toledo to lend their help. Finding the conquest of Toledo an uphill task Sultan Muhammad hid a large part of his troops behind the hills, mounds and bushes and advanced with a small force. The people of Toledo seeing a small army mustered their courage to go ahead and attack the Muslim force. When the actual battle started, the Muslim force in large numbers rose from all sides and the Christians fled in fear and confusion but the Muslim troops surrounded and killed twenty thousand Christian forces, which destroyed the defenses of the

people of Toledo. Sultan Muhammad occupied Toledo easily and established a small military presence therein.

The Christians of Toledo had suffered such a crushing defeat that they did not repeat their action against Muslim rule. However, they had now formed relations with the Northern Christian States. At this time, many Commanders of the Royal Force and Governors had secretly entered into correspondence with the rulers of Asturias, Gothic March, Galicia, and France they then hatched a conspiracy against their own ruler. They once again rose in revolt in 242 A.H. Sultan Muhammad invaded Toledo again and returned after punishing the rebels. However, they took up arms again under the leadership of a Christian chief. Sultan Muhammad had to go there yet again. At last, in 248 A.H. Sultan agreed to confer sovereignty on the people of Toledo after their submission to Muslim rule. They were given freedom to choose their own Governor who should send a fixed annual amount to Cordova. Toledo was left free to manage its own affairs. By acceding to this condition Sultan Muhammad showed not only his weakness but allowed the Christians to lay the foundation stone of Christian rule in Spain once again. He, in this way, dug a hole into the very foundation of Muslim rule in Spain, which led to its end. The people of Toledo wanted to appoint the son of Musa bin Musa as Governor. Sultan Muhammad gave it his approval. Following this Christians from the northern hilly States and warring Christians began to join the state of Toledo in large numbers and they started uprooting Muslims from there. The city of Toledo turned out to be another model based on the Asturias State. Musa bin Musa had, on the other hand, entered into a secret pact with the Christian States and this family of traitors played a fundamental role in weakening the Islamic rule although they were overtly considered a Muslim family.

The same year the Normans descended on the western coast of Spain and made inroads into the coastal areas but the ships of Sultan Muhammad captured fifty of their boats and they fled without inflicting much loss.

In Rajab, 251 A.H. Sultan Muhammad sent his son, Mundhir towards the north to Alva and Alcala to punish the insurgent Christians and he himself set out behind him towards Galicia. Father and son both were

crowned with victory. But the insurgent Christians were fully aware of the war policy of the Muslim rulers. Facing an attack of a strong Muslim force, they escaped to the hills and then sought forgiveness and recaptured their lost territory on the return of the invading troops. This was repeated once again, as the Royal Force retreated to Cordova, the Christians made their advances. Prior to this, the Christian attacks were meant for plundering Muslim territories but now, in view of the inherent weakness of the Muslim rulers of recent times, they would appoint their Governors to manage the affairs of the occupied land and carry out expansionist activities. They were restless to descend on the eastern coast after capturing Barcelona and they kept occupying the western coast and brought the Portuguese territory under their control. Although Sultan Muhammad built a war fleet and dispatched it to attack Galicia, it was overtaken by a violent storm and returned after incurring heavy losses. Following this the very thought of a sea campaign was abandoned.

Insurgencies rose in a number of cities and every city with a large Christian population claimed sovereign rule. Sultan Muhammad never had total peace.

### **New Religion Invented**

Abdur Rahman bin Marwan also took up arms against Sultan Muhammad. He had already revolted more than once but was still holding a high post in the area of Merida as a concession. Sultan Muhammad invaded the territory and after three months of encounters, Abdur Rahman bin Marwan, instead of leaving for Baghdad, invented a new faith in Spain. The new faith consisted of tenets of both Islam and Christianity. Many vagabond elements amongst the Muslims and the Christians joined it. Since the wind of willfulness and anarchy were blowing throughout the country, a large number of misguided people joined Abdur Rahman bin Marwan and in this way, a strong force came into being in the area of Galicia and Portugal under the leadership of Abdur Rahman. Sultan Muhammad sent a force headed by his Prime Minister, Hashim bin Abdul Aziz. Abdur Rahman deluded Hashim by running away in front of him and led the pursuing Muslims to a place where his force was lying in ambush, which surrounded them on all sides, and killed all the troops and

captured Hashim. Abdur Rahman bin Marwan was already in correspondence with Alfonso, the ruler of Asturias. He sent Hashim to the Christian ruler to make a show of his strength and thus strengthening his friendly ties with him. Sultan Muhammad wrote Abdur Rahman bin Marwan to release Hashim. Abdur Rahman bin Marwan demanded a sum of one hundred thousand dinars. After corresponding for a few months Sultan Muhammad agreed to Abdur Rahman bin Marwan's rule over Badajoz (Arabic: Badalyaws) and its environs without paying any tribute and after receiving ransom for the release of Hashim. When Hashim came out of captivity, he found Abdur Rahman bin Marwan a strong and sovereign ruler. According to Ibn Khaldun Prime Minister Hashim was released in 265 A.H. after passing two and half years in prison.

In short, Abdur Rahman bin Marwan, an ordinary insurgent chieftain now considered himself a ruler equal in position to Sultan Muhammad. He also strengthened his friendly relations with the Asturias State. This event resulted in a series of revolts in almost every part of the country and the fear of the Umayyads rule went out of their minds.

Musa bin Dhun'nun, governor of Shant Briah revolted and invaded Toledo but was defeated. He attacked once again and the trial of strength continued. Asad bin Harth bin Badi'a raised his standard in revolt. Sultan Muhammad sent Prince Mundhir to take on Musa bin Dhun'nun. Mundhir conquered a number of cities and came back to Cordova. In short, Sultan Muhammad could not get even a day's respite from these engagements.

At this crucial period Umar bin Hafsun, a Christian from the Spanish peninsula organized a group of bandits in the southeastern hills. Making his fortress in a difficult hilly place as his center Umar bin Hafsun started his plundering and robbing activities. Governors of the nearby cities and towns invaded the area a number of times but suffered defeats. Finally, a strong army was sent from Cordova in 267 A.H. to punish him but he sent a petition seeking peace and promising normalcy in the area and the hilly fortress was left under his control.

In 268 A.H., Sultan Muhammad sent his son, Mundhir at the head of a huge army to punish the insurgent Christians of the northern parts. Prince Mundhir first went to Saragossa and put the insurgents in

order and then marched to Alva and Alcala. He also restored peace in Lerida and returned after appointing Ismail bin Musa as the administrator there but with the return of Mundhir the ruler of Barcelona attacked Ismail but Ismail latter defeated him.

In 270 A.H., Umar bin Hafsun raised his head again and broke the peace of Malaga. Hashim bin Abdul Aziz, the Prime Minister of Cordova marched from Cordova to punish Umar bin Hafsun. After some initial encounters, Hashim contacted Umar bin Hafsun and tried to bring him to reason and made him agree to accompany him to Cordova. Prime Minister Hashim was very happy with the bravery of Umar bin Hafsun. He took the matter to Sultan Muhammad and had him appoint Umar bin Hafsun the Commander-in-chief of the Royal Force.

In 271 A.H., Prime Minister Hashim took Umar bin Hafsun and marched to the North at the head of a strong army. The people of Saragossa had once again raised their heads and Asturias was also threatening the peace. Umar bin Hafsun won much acclaim during these campaigns and both of them returned with a large amount of booty.

Umar bin Hafsun was not content with the leadership of Islamic forces since, in his present state, he could not hope to establish a Gothic state. He broke away from Hashim on the way back and went straight to his old fort. His old friends and supporters joined him there and Umar bin Hafsun proclaimed his sovereign rule in Malaga. Abdur Rahman bin Marwan, on the other hand, started plundering Seville and its suburbs. Sultan Muhammad sent his son Mundhir and Prime Minister, Hashim to Seville at the head of an army. Because of these attacks and the Sultan's being kept busy in other areas Umar bin Hafsun found time to strengthen his power. Seville and its suburbs remained under the shadow of strife and fighting for about two years. Finally, peace was bought from Abdur Rahman bin Marwan in 272 A.H. by giving away some more territories.

Following this Prince Mundhir was sent to Umar bin Hafsun. Umar bin Hafsun had now become more civilized and far-sighted. He had learned a lot from Cordova and Prime Minister Hashim and he was no longer a robber and bandit. He had now donned the mantle of a ruler. As his first step, he eradicated theft and robbery from the

bounds of the territory under his control and took to punishing offenders and criminals very harshly. His people enjoyed perfect peace and safety and extended their support to their ruler.

### **Death of Sultan Muhammad**

Sultan Muhammad had sent his crown prince Mundhir bin Muhammad to punish Umar bin Hafsun. During early encounters Umar bin Hafsun suffered setbacks and he was about to be arrested or killed for he was wounded and his troops had fallen in disorder. Umar was about to lay down his arms when Mundhir was shocked to hear the news of his father's death and he rushed to Cordova. Thus Umar bin Hafsun was saved from total disaster.

Sultan Muhammad was born in 207 A.H. and he died in 273 A.H., after ruling for 34 years and some months, his son succeeded him.

### **Assessment of Sultan Muhammad's Rule**

The entire tenure of Sultan Muhammad was overtaken by conflict and disturbances and he did not enjoy peace even for a single day. The never-ending revolts and external threats and conspiracies kept him engaged and troubled all the time. During the rule of Sultan Muhammad, the Umayyads had lost much of their power and prestige and even ordinary men took up arms against the throne. The Christians reaped the most benefit from the weakness and disruption in the Muslim ranks. They had now started envisioning setting up their rule once again in Spain.

Sultan Muhammad was brave and prompt but internal disturbances and rebellions of Muslim commanders had sent the country into chaos and untold miseries. Christian countries and the Abbasid Caliphs were playing their roles in creating discord and disunity among the Muslims. Moreover, the Muslim jurists also contributed in dividing the Muslims on doctrinal lines. Prior to the situation during his rule, Christians in large numbers had come to the fold of Islam and despite the discouraging propaganda of the Christians of the Northern States, sensible sections of them felt attracted to the Islamic character and way of life.

However, during the period of Sultan Muhammad the religious spiritual leaders and jurists issued verdicts, which went against the legal Islamic rights of the Christians. Those Muslims converted to Islam also felt unsafe, with the result, that apostasy raised its head and many converts began to revert to Christianity. Nothing was more unfortunate than Muslim spiritual leaders and jurists causing a large group of new Muslims to be categorized as apostates, this proved very dangerous and that danger was right in the heart of Cordova. Due to the tight grip the Muslim spiritual leaders and jurists held over the proclamation of legal verdicts and the competition between rival groups of scholars, justice one of the outstanding attributes of Islam, suffered tremendously and the people reacted in kind.

During the last days of Sultan Muhammad different groups emerged with different purposes in view:

- 1) Pure Arab race: they were disunited and had different groups like Syrians, Yemenites, Hijazi, and Hadramis (people from Hadramaut, southern Yemen) and they had in most cases accepted their superiority as a given fact.
- 2) Mixed: those who were from Arab fathers and Christian mothers from Spain and Berber fathers and Spanish mothers.
- 3) The new-Muslims: those who were Christians before their conversion to Islam. Their offspring were also called new-Muslims and they would follow Islam strictly.
- 4) Pure Berbers: they were originally North Africans and were found in large numbers.
- 5) The Magi: They were the progeny of those who were bought as slaves from various countries and were not large in number.
- 6) Jews: They were old citizens of Spain. They were traders by profession and kept aloof from insurgent activities.
- 7) Christians: They followed their faith freely and they were in large number.

**Apostates:** They were those who had reverted to Christianity during the period of Sultan Muhammad. Along with them, there was a group that followed no faith and lived on plundering and robbery.

The first four Muslim groups were considered the real Islamic force. The ruler as well as the Muslim spiritual leaders and jurists should have given equal treatment to all but Sultan Muhammad made a grave mistake by treating the Mixed group as inferior, although they were larger in number. The emerging discord among the religious leaders and their doctrinal differences dampened the spirit of the new-Muslims. The Berbers too were affected. All this resulted in the loss of spirituality and the weakening of the morality of the Muslims of Spain as a whole. The spirit of *Jihad* was almost lost. The swords that were unsheathed in the way of Allah were now serving personal causes and self-interest. Special interest groups began to appear. The more the Sultan added to the power and influence of the Muslim jurists the more he lost the confidence of the people. This loss of confidence led the people to lose love for Islam and prefer a materialistic approach to life.

While Muslim rule was on the decline in every respect, the Christian States had expanded to equalize the Muslim State and were progressing rapidly. Alfonso, the ruler of Asturias was planning to drive away the Muslims from the bounds of Spain. Portuguese Christians were ready to establish their separate rule. Seville was under the rule of Ibn Marwan while Malaga was under the control of Ibn Hafsun. Toledo had expanded its territories up to the surroundings of Cordova, Galicia, and Aragon the state of Toledo had power from the Pyrenees to the western coast of Spain. In short, Sultan Mundhir had come to the throne at a very tumultuous time.

### **Accession of Mundhir bin Muhammad**

Mundhir bin Muhammad was born in 229 A.H. He succeeded his father in Safar, 273 A.H. His entire life had been passed in fighting. He had served as Commander several times during the tenure of his father.

### **Deeds**

Shortly after his accession to the throne he did away with Hashim bin Abdul Aziz, the Prime Minister of his father who was condemned to death by the religious leaders. Getting rid of Hashim, he attacked Umar bin Hafsun and went ahead conquering forts and driving off enemy troops. Ibn Hafsun sought peace and Mundhir accepted it. But Sultan



Mundhir was yet to arrive in his capital when he heard of Ibn Hafsun's revolt. He turned back right from there and surrounded the city. Ibn Hafsun begged pardon very humbly and agreed to accompany the Sultan to Cordova. Sultan Mundhir took him to the capital with honor.

Sultan Mundhir had decided to invade Toledo shortly after reaching Cordova and only would considered something else after conquering Toledo. He was wise enough to understand the importance of Toledo with respect to its situation while his predecessors had failed to recognize this fact. Toledo was situated in the middle of Spain and was strong enough to curb the territorial ambitions of the Northern Christian States. Although Sultan Mundhir had decided to utilize Umar bin Hafsun's abilities in some suitable job, Ibn Hafsun thought of the fate of Hashim bin Abdul Aziz and fled away by hiding from Mundhir's men. He once again went straight to his fort and took refuge therein and his people rejoined him.

### **Death of Sultan Mundhir**

Sultan Mundhir turned back once again and besieged the fort. Umar bin Hafsun put up a strong fight with the result the siege dragged on. The fort was yet to be conquered when Sultan Mundhir died in 275 A.H. at the age of 46 years after ruling for less than two years. He had no male child so the nobles made the oath of allegiance to his brother Abdullah.

### **Accession of Abdullah**

Abdullah recognized the rule of Umar bin Hafsun. He then took the funeral bier of his brother and moved towards Cordova. Arab commanders started criticizing him on the way and their condemnation rose to such an extent that all but less than a hundred soldiers deserted him by the time Abdullah stepped in Cordova with the body of Sultan Mundhir.

### **First Weakness of Abdullah**

The first mistake committed by Sultan Abdullah bin Muhammad shortly after accession was that he immediately recognized Umar bin Hafsun as a ruler, although he could have won much support if he had conquered the fort.

## Condition of the Umayyads during the Rule of Abdullah

At the time of the accession of Abdullah the condition of the Umayyad dynasty in Spain had touched a new low. The treasury was empty. The annual revenue, which had once gone up to one million dinars had now come down to one hundred thousand dinars annually. Apart from the Christian States Cordova had given birth to two strong rivals, which were equal to the central rule. On one side was Umar bin Hafsun and Ibn Marwan on the other. Ibn Hafsun was wiser and his style of governance had attracted a larger number of people and they liked to be governed by him. But since he was declared an apostate, many Muslims withdraw their support from him and turned towards his rival Ibn Marwan. Ibn Hafsun had no truck with the Christians despite his being labeled an apostate but Ibn Marwan, despite being a Muslim had friendly relations with Alfonso, the ruler of Asturias and others. Some Arab chiefs had their estates in the environs of Seville and had settled there. But in view of the turbulent situation, they rose in revolt and occupied Seville. The same types of feudal rulers seized Granada. Thus, two more power bases rose as Ibn Hafsun and Ibn Marwan's rivals. These four all took up arms against each other and Cordova had no power to punish any of them. He sometimes played the role of a peacemaker because each of them recognized Abdullah bin Muhammad as his king, although they were all independent in practice paying no tribute to the king. But since the Arab chiefs did not treat the new-Muslims well they in large number left to join Ibn Marwan.

During the same period, two Governors of the Northern cities inflicted a heavy setback on the Christian plans to end the Muslim occupation of Spain. Governor Lab bin Muhammad of Talsuna with a small band drove away the forces of the king of Asturias when he moved towards the south. Abdur Rahman bin Marwan on the other hand sent word to his friend, the king of Asturias that he would be the first man to take him on in case he overstepped his bounds. This warning silenced the Christians for sometime for they knew well that their invasions would help to bring the warring Muslim powers together.

Ibn Hafsun very cleverly corresponded with Aghlabid dynasty of Africa and requested to make the Abbasid Caliph issue him

credentials for ruling Spain. Although Umar bin Hafsun failed in his attempt, Cordova was shocked to hear this news and it invaded Ibn Hafsun. Sultan Abdullah knew very well that any such credentials from the Abbasid Caliph would turn the people to him. Sultan Abdullah could not gather together more than fourteen thousand troops while Ibn Hafsun had thirty thousand soldiers under his command. When the rival forces came face-to-face, Sultan Abdullah displayed extraordinary valor, defeated and drove Ibn Hafsun and his troops back to hills. This victory brought some prestige to Cordova.

### **Abdullah's Action**

During the same days Abdur Rahman bin Marwan made peace with Ibrahim bin Hajjaj the sovereign ruler of Seville and tried to strengthen his power. Sultan Abdullah thought it necessary to break the back of Ibn Marwan. He then sent his Prime Minister Ahmad bin Abi Ubaidah to take on Ibn Marwan who sought help from Seville. Ibrahim bin Hajjaj rose to help him but Ahmad bin Abi Ubaidah defeated the joint forces following which Ibrahim bin Hajjaj offered his allegiance to Abdullah who appointed him as the Governor of Seville. This victory added even more to the prestige and power of Cordova. Following this event Abdur Rahman bin Marwan died and his sons began to rule Toledo. But Ibrahim bin Hajjaj annexed some of their territories. On the return of the Sultan, Umar bin Hafsun came out of the hills and began to increase his power once again.

Alfonso the king of Asturias clashed with his brother and sought to renew his peace treaty with Sultan Abdullah who welcomed the offer. The Sultan made peace on the condition that both sides would honor each other's territorial integrity. This peace treaty was however, in favor of Alfonso for he now enjoyed peace and safety from the Muslims who claimed the territories under his rule.

The people had become fed up with all the frequent disorder and began to express themselves against rising in revolt or supporting the rebels. Thus, all the various rulers enjoyed peace for a time in their respective States. However, all of them would show due respect to Cordova.

## Children

Sultan Abdullah had eleven sons and out of those Mutrif and Muhammad were mature enough to take part in the administrative affairs of the State. However, with the passage of time they felt enmity towards one another. Most of the able and sensible men had already shifted to Seville because scholars and intellectuals were held in esteem there. Cordova's treasury had run out. The emerging State of Seville under Ibrahim bin Hajjaj had become enviable even to Cordova. The low-spirited courtiers and nobles left no stone unturned to aggravate the enmity between the two brothers. Mutrif did a lot to poison his father's ears against his brother Muhammad and his supporters among the courtiers confirmed his allegations. Circumstantial compulsion made Muhammad escape from Cordova and join Umar bin Hafsun. Shortly thereafter, he felt his mistake and sent a message to his father that he was ready to return to Cordova provided he was given safety of life. Abdullah acceded to his request. Now Mutrif had an opportunity to turn his father against Muhammad even more than before, with the result Abdullah confined his son to a portion of his palace. Sultan Abdullah had to leave Cordova for a few days. He appointed Mutrif as the ruler of Cordova to look after the State affairs during his absence. Mutrif took advantage of the opportunity and had Muhammad assassinated. Abdullah was shocked at this event. He then began to raise Muhammad's son Abdur Rahman with much love and care. After sometime Mutrif assassinated the Prime Minister Abdul Malik bin Umayyah under some trumped up charges. Sultan Abdullah grew furious and had Mutrif killed in retaliation.

## Death

Sultan Abdullah died on 1 Rabia al-Awwal 300 A.H. at the age of 42 years after ruling for 25 years. His whole period of rule was passed in dealing with riots, strikes and disturbances, which weakened his rule. Evidently, there was no hope of restoration of the past glory. His grandson Abdur Rahman succeeded sultan Abdullah.

## Chapter 5

# **Abdur Rahman III**

### Accession

Abdur Rahman succeeded his grandfather Abdullah on 1 Rabi-al-Awwal 300 A.H. at the age of 21 years. The country that had been conquered by Tariq and Musa and the rule founded by Abdur Rahman al-Dakhil was torn into pieces and was on the verge of going to the Christian fold. But divine decree had decided to give some more time. The young Sultan had a number of uncles who claimed the throne by virtue of their age and rights. Either because of their noble sentiments or their being disinterested in ruling a rotten and wretched State they kept silent.

### First Order

Shortly after succession the young Sultan issued orders that all sorts of taxes and duties levied on the people by his predecessors particularly Sultan Abdullah to fill the public treasury be curbed. And those against the Islamic code were abrogated. This proclamation produced a good effect and the Sultan was lavishly praised for this action.

Following this he proclaimed that those obeying the rule and promising firmness in their loyalty would get his past faults pardoned without any distinction of faith. Since the people had become fed up with anarchy and civil wars, strife and disorder almost all the rulers of the small States adjoining Cordova appeared before the Sultan to confess their loyalty to him. The public revenue rose to fill the treasury and mitigate the losses of the canceled taxes.

## **Two Rival Forces**

Now only two mighty powers were left who could challenge Cordova and both were not far away. On one hand was Umar bin Hafsun, the ruler of Malaga, Rayyu and Bashter who wanted to destroy the rule of Cordova with the support of the Fatimids of North Africa and he would also receive help from the northern Christian rulers. The Christians liked him because of his reversion to Christianity. The Arabs on the other hand, ruled Seville and its power and grandeur had excelled the Court of Cordova. Abdur Rahman, first of all, turned to Seville and pressed it to confess loyalty to him. Many chiefs of Seville offered their allegiance to his central rule.

## **First Campaign**

When Sultan Abdur Rahman III felt safe concerning Seville, he sent his freed slave Badr to Umar bin Hafsun at the head of a strong army. Badr started conquering Umar bin Hafsun forts one after another. After losing a large part of his plains, he took refuge in his hilly forts. Badr returned safe and sound and this victory attracted a large number of people to join Abdur Rahman's army.

## **Revolts Curbed**

Sultan Abdur Rahman III invaded Seville to punish the disobedient Ibn Maslama. Ibn Maslama sought help from Umar bin Hafsun who promptly came to his aid. When the royal force advanced towards Seville, Umar bin Hafsun's force moved from the rear. However, Abdur Rahman beat it back and defeated Ibn Maslama too who was captured. Sultan Abdur Rahman III sent his own governor to Seville. He was able to do it without any difficulty because the relatives of Maslama and his

courtiers also wanted Seville to be annexed by Cordova. One of the famous Commanders of Seville named Ishaq bin Muhammad came to Cordova and after judging his worth Sultan Abdur Rahman III, made him Prime Minister of Cordova and on his death the post was given to his son Ahmed bin Ishaq.

At this point, the greatness and glory of Cordova touched a new high and Sultan Abdur Rahman built his force to deal with Umar bin Hafsun. He invaded his territories in 304 A.H. Umar bin Hafsun sought help from the Fatimids but Sultan Abdur Rahman intercepted their warships with his own and didn't allow them to reach Ibn Hafsun. All the ships were captured at sea. Ibn Hafsun lost all hope and sent a petition to the Sultan seeking pardon and promising his submission and loyalty to Cordova in the future. The Sultan seized all his green and fertile lands and left Ibn Hafsun a small territory. Achieving peace and success, he returned to Cordova.

Following this, the Sultan sent a force under the command of Prime Minister Ishaq bin Muhammad to punish Murcia and Valencia. Ishaq brought the insurgents to order and invaded Carmona and removed its ruler Habib bin Suwarah and annexed it to Cordova. The same year the freed slave Badr invaded Lablah, captured the rebel chief Uthman bin Nasr and sent him to Cordova. In 306 A.H., he conquered the fort of Sambarah and forced the rebels to obey.

### **Conspiracy Against the Sultan**

In 308 A.H. Muhammad bin Abdul Jabbar bin Sultan Muhammad in collaboration with Qadi bin Sultan Muhammad, hatched a plot to assassinate Sultan Abdur Rahman III and capture the throne. However, one of the plotters informed the Sultan of the situation. The Sultan, instead of taking any hasty steps, kept investigating the matter and killed both of them only after the charge was substantiated. Since their crime had become known, nobody raised any objection to their punishment.

Tarsawi Fort was conquered in 309 A.H. The same year Ahmad bin Adkhi Hamdani who had occupied Jama and was defiant offered allegiance on his own and sent his son to Cordova as a hostage. The

other chiefs who had established their independent rule were one by one either made to obey or killed. The territory of Cordova expanded and the condition of the country considerably improved. Now the country that had been divided into scores of fragments rose again as a mighty Islamic state.

### **Details of the occupied Christian Territories**

A hilly area adjoining the southeastern coast occupied by Ibn Hafsun had turned Christian. Ibn Hafsun's wide experience had made it a strong Christian State. However, it had made peace with the central rule of Cordova. Toledo was a strong and formidable city, which had become a sovereign state during the period of Sultan Abdullah. The state was situated in the middle of Spain. There were Christian States in Barcelona and Catalonia and Navarre also had a strong State adjoining Catalonia, which was ruled by the French. Asturias had risen as a very large State stretching into the plains of Spain having Galicia, Leon and Castile under its sway.

In addition to these, several small Christian States were established on the Portuguese coast on the Atlantic Ocean and were subordinate to Galicia. These conquered Christian territories fell within the bounds of Spain. Besides those mentioned, there were Christian states of southeastern France, western France and northern France, which were bent on opposing Spain. The only corner of Muslim rule stretching out towards the north was Saragossa, which was ruled over by a Muslim governor. He had friendly relations with the Christians and nobody objected to it for Sultan Abdullah and Alfonso III themselves had signed a peace treaty, which was violated by none.

Getting rid of all the rebels within a few years Sultan Abdur Rahman III invaded Toledo. Before the invasion, the Sultan sent word to the people of Toledo to obey him and join his camp. Toledo gave a bitter reply and started making military preparation of large proportions besides asking the Christians everywhere to rise up to save Toledo. Sultan Abdur Rahman marched on Toledo with the utmost care and caution. The Sultan conquered Toledo after a concerted effort, striving and fighting for about one year. He treated the conquered kindly and softly and returned to Cordova after putting the administrative affairs of Toledo



right. Since the Fatimids of Northern Africa were torn by internal strife, they posed no danger to Cordova. Spain was now safe because Morocco also came under the occupation of Sultan Abdur Rahman III.

### **The Governor of Saragossa (Sarcat) revolts**

Internal feuds of the Christian powers came to an end in 322 A.H. The Christians then had Muhammad bin Hisham as the Governor of Saragossa rise against the central rule and promised him all their help. Now the whole territory from Barcelona to Galicia rose up against Sultan Abdur Rahman III. The annexation of Morocco had infuriated the Christians and so they decided to break the back of Abdur Rahman by setting the Governor of Saragossa against the Muslim ruler.

Abdur Rahman turned to the north to chastise the Governor and found the Christians ready to take him on. He won a decisive victory and arrested Muhammad bin Hisham while the Christian forces fled to their respective territories. Abdur Rahman singled out each of them and made them the target of his attack and made each of them to submit. Sultan Abdur Rahman returned to Cordova after serving a warning to the Christians, punishing Muhammad bin Hisham thoroughly and appointing Umayyah bin Ishaq as the governor of Saragossa.

### **Battle of Trenches**

In 327 A.H, a brother of Umayyah bin Ishaq was charged with hatching a plot and the Sultan put him to death. Umayyah bin Ishaq was shocked and distressed at this action. The Christian powers extended their sympathy to Umayyah and set him against the Sultan. The Christian king Ramiro was very clever and experienced. Umayyah revolted and shifted to Galicia with as much treasure and force as he could take away with him. Forces from other Christian States rushed to join him. This was in fact the greatest demonstration of Christian might in Spain, which was joined by a Muslim governor with all the power at his command. Besides, he gave some secret information and significant advice. The presence of Umayyah bin Ishaq was very encouraging. On hearing this new development, Sultan Abdur Rahman III declared  *Jihad*  with the result that people in large numbers joined his camp.

The number of Muslim troops rose to fifty thousands. As the Muslim force advanced towards the north, the Christian troops concentrated in Simancas. The Christians fortified the city and made a trench in front of it along with having a huge army. Ramiro was the Commander-in-chief of the allied Christian forces and Umayyah bin Ishaq was his supporter and adviser. The Muslim army initiated the attack and the Christian troops came out to meet the challenge. The Christians were defeated in every engagement. A few days after the initial engagements, the Christian force was besieged in the fortifications of Simancas. The Muslim force advanced into the fortifications and they conquered three walls one after another. But as they crossed the last wall, the Christian troops snipped at the surrounded Muslim army and they could not move ahead or go back and they fell into the trenches only to die. Only 49 fighters were able to save their lives and Abdur Rahman III was the 50th person to remain alive. He was pulled out of the trench with much difficulty. Ramiro wanted to send a squadron in pursuit of the fifty men including Sultan Abdur Rahman III but Umayyah bin Ishaq advised against this risky step for the Muslim force might attack from an ambush. Abdur Rahman suffered an immense setback. Never since the first Muslims had set foot on the soil of Spain had the Muslims suffered such a heavy setback. The battle was known as the Battle of Trenches.

When Umayyah bin Ishaq at the end of the bloody battle witnessed the battlefield filled with the dead bodies of fifty thousand Muslims, he was shocked to the core and repented his mistake and his conscience reproved him for what he had done. He sent a petition to the Sultan seeking pardon for his fault and he deserted the Christians. Having returned to Cordova Sultan Abdur Rahman built a huge army and sent it to the Christian countries. It went on beating and defeating the Christian forces and deprived them of taking advantage of the Muslim setback of the Battle of Trenches. The Muslim force reached to the French territories and returned with a large amount of booty.

### **The Abbasid Caliphate suffers**

The same year, 327 A.H., the Abbasid Caliph Muqtadir was assassinated and the Fatimids laid their claim to the caliphate. In view of the absence of any threat from the Abbasid caliphate and the Fatimids

unpopularity among the Sunni Muslims, Sultan Abdur Rahman adopted the title of *Amir-Al-Mominin* (Commander of the Faithful) and chose for himself the appellation of "*Nasir-Ledinillah*" (The Victor for Allah's Religion). Nobody objected to this and, in fact, in the entire world of Islam he alone deserved to be called Caliph of the Muslims. Shortly after this, Abdur Rahman turned to constructing palatial buildings and beautifying Cordova. However, for the next eight to ten years he kept sending forces against the northern Christian States every year. The Christians were thus subdued to such an extent that they came to the Muslims for peace, safety and security.

The events mentioned so far bring to surface one glaring mistake of Caliph Abdur Rahman III that in spite of gaining full control over the situation he neglected the most necessary task of annihilating the northern Christian States for their insurrections. It was also, perhaps, because that in those days no one could think that the descendants of the Muslims of Spain would ever be so poor and weak and would not be able to withstand the Christian onslaughts of the future and they would get wiped out without leaving any trace behind.

### **Navy and Army Strengthened**

From 328 A.H. starts by and large the period of peace for Abdur Rahman III and nothing was apparently able to threaten him. During this period the Muslim ruler paid his exclusive attention to the strengthening of his navy and army, he built warships and his fleet became the strongest of all time. The Caliph's supremacy on the Mediterranean Sea was recognized by everyone. He built a magnificent building adjoining his old royal palace and added to the beauty and adornment of the Cordova Mosque. Academic discussions were held and facilities given to traders who began to go to far off places with their commodities.

### **Worldwide Glory of Abdur Rahman**

Very soon the fame of Caliph Abdur Rahman encircled the World. In 336 A.H., Constantine the king of Constantinople sent his emissaries to Cordova with precious gifts. In this way, he attempted to display his wealth and grandeur on one hand and win the friendship of Caliph

Abdur Rahman on the other. When Caliph Abdur Rahman came to know of the approaching emissaries, he issued orders to decorate the entire city of Cordova. His forces in glittering uniforms stood in two rows. And the emissaries were left in amazement at the work of golden embroidery on the curtains hanging along the doors and walls and the other kinds of decoration and began to look down upon the presents brought by them. Passing through the marble pillars and mosaic floors the emissaries entered the magnificent palace where Caliph Abdur Rahman III was sitting on his throne with his nobles, scholars, poets and commanders standing in order. The emissaries were astonished to witness such an exhibition and awesome scene. However, they recovered from their state of wonderment, made obeisance to the Caliph and handed over the letter from their king. In a sky blue cover with some thing written in gold letters was wrapped a small box with a heavy golden seal, on one side of the seal was engraved the image of Christ and that of Constantine on the other. There was a smaller crystal box within the small box with golden and silver floral designs engraved on it and inside of it was a beautiful silken envelope in which was a letter written in letters of gold on a sky blue thin skin. On the top, the Caliph Abdur Rahman was addressed with glorious appellations. The Caliph had the letter read out. Following that he suggested that Muhammad bin Abdul Barr should make an improvised speech for which he was famous. The jurist spoke a few words but the splendor and awe of the assembly overpowered his mind so much so that he fell down unconscious. He was followed by Abu Ali Ismail bin Qasim who rose to speak but could not say a word after glorifying Allah Almighty. He appeared overpowered by anxiety. Witnessing this an ordinary religious leader Mundhir bin Sayeed stood up and began to speak without any fear or hesitation. The speech was so pleasant, fervid and suitable to the occasion that it attracted loud applause. The Caliph became so pleased that he appointed Mundhir bin Sayeed Chief Justice of the caliphate. The court was then adjourned and the emissaries were treated as honored guests. After enjoying the royal hospitality for a few days, the ambassadors took leave accompanied by Hisham bin Hudhayl who was sent to the king of Constantinople by Caliph Abdur Rahman as his emissary. He was instructed to bring a friendly agreement from Constantine. Hisham did it successfully and came back to Cordova.

Following this, the envoys of Italy, Germany, France and Sicily came to the Caliph one after another to have good relations and friendship with Cordova. Every ruler of Europe vied with each other to win the support of Cordova to keep safe from their enemies.

Caliph Abdur Rahman made his son Hakam his heir apparent. Another son Abdullah was inclined to religious practices and was called "the pious". A Muslim jurist of Cordova tempted him to take the throne by assassinating the Caliph. Abdullah in collaboration with Abdul Bari, the jurist, hatched a plot to assassinate the Caliph and the crown prince. Many others were made to join the conspiracy. But the plot was unearthed on 10 Dhul Hijjah, 339 A.H. and both Abdur Rahman and Hakam were saved. Abdullah and the jurist Abdul Bari were put in jail. On the first day of their imprisonment, the Caliph executed his son Abdullah and Abdul Bari committed suicide in the prison.

On the death of Ramiro the king of Galicia in 334 A.H., his son Ordoneo succeeded him and sent his envoy to Cordova to seek permission for his accession. The Caliph acceded to his petition and granted him permission to rule in Galicia. In 345 A.H., Ferdinand the ruler of Castile sent a petition recommended by Ordoneo IV to the Caliph to grant permission for ruling and he was also given permission.

Sancho had occupied his ancestral State Leon and his maternal grandmother Tota was the ruler of Navarre State. Sancho became victim of fatness to such an extent that he was unable to even walk. Ferdinand and Ordoneo dislodged him from Leon. Sancho came to his grandmother in Navarre State where he also had a maternal uncle. However, his grandmother ruled the State because of her abilities and experience and played her role as the guardian of her son, Sancho's maternal uncle. Queen Tota sent precious presents to the Caliph and entreated his help for the restoration of Leon and Galicia, which was forcibly occupied by Ferdinand and Ordoneo and also to send a physician for treating fatness. The Caliph promptly responded to the entreaty and sent at once a physician to Navarre. However, the restoration of the lost State of Leon was put off to some other date. Sancho responded to the treatment and was cured and he regained his health and was able to be active again.

### **Three Petitioners in the Court of the Caliphate**

In 447 A.H. Queen Tota decided to personally visit Cordova to persuade the Caliph to restore Leon. She left along with her son the King of Navarre and her maternal grandson, Sancho the King of Leon. These three Christian rulers set out from the French territories to appear before the Caliph. It was a very absorbing scene. People thronged the route they were traveling to have a glance at the passing royal party. On reaching Cordova, they were accorded a warm welcome. On entering the palace, they were subdued by the awe and grandeur of the Caliph and his court. The Caliph was so deeply moved by their visit that he sent with his guests some troops to restore Leon and Galicia back to Sancho, which they did. Ordone fled to Castile to be with Ferdinand. In view of the consequences of what happened to Ordone, the King of Barcelona and the chief of Tarragona sent their envoys to Cordova to confess that they were but the slaves of Cordova. They considered their ability to rule as an endowment from the caliphate and they were ready to fulfill all the conditions of their rule with a deep sense of obedience and loyalty. The Caliph granted them permission to rule in their respective territories.

### **Patronizing of Scholars**

Caliph Abdur Rahman III made it a point to call those who excelled in every walk of life to his court with the result that scholars and men of skill from Baghdad, Constantinople, Cairo, Damascus, Madinah, Makkah, Yemen, Iran, and Khorasan joined the court of Cordova. They all belonged to different faiths and nationalities.

### **Construction Works**

Caliph Abdur Rahman III occupies the same position in Spain, that Shah Jahan enjoyed among the Mughal kings of India. Even though the construction work of the Mosque of Cordova was started by Abdur Rahman I and was completed by his son Hisham, every succeeding ruler added to the beauty and grandeur of the mosque. Caliph Abdur Rahman III also spent in the millions on it. The length of the mosque

from the east to the west was five hundred feet while its arches were based on one thousand four hundred marble pillars. Close to the main arch lays a high pulpit of pure ivory and of thirty six thousand wooden pieces of different colors and designs and studded with jewels of all kinds. The pulpit had taken seven years to be completed. Caliph Abdur Rahman III had a new minaret erected for the mosque eight hundred feet high after removing the old ones and the new minaret had one hundred and seven ascending and descending steps. The mosque contained ten thousand big and small chandeliers for providing light out of which three of the biggest all were made of pure silver and the rest were of brass. The big chandeliers each had one thousand four hundred eighty lighted cups. Three hundred employees maintained the mosque.

Caliph Abdur Rahman III built for his Christian wife Zahra a magnificent palace at the foot of *Jabal-al-Urus* four miles away from Cordova. The building was so broad-based that it came to be called *Madinat-al-Zahra* (Zahra city) instead of *Qasral-Zahra* (Zahra palace). The expanse of the palace can be understood from the fact that its walls had fifteen thousand high steel doors. The palace was four miles long and three miles wide. The foundation stone of the palace was laid in 325 A.H. and it was completed in 350 A.H. Ten thousand masons and architects and four thousand camels and donkeys were brought to serve daily during the construction period. The palace had four thousand three hundred and sixteen towers and was supported by thousands of pillars made of marble and other precious stone. Some of the pillars were presented to Caliph Abdur Rahman III by the kings of Constantinople and France. Marble in large quantity was brought from Africa by royal engineers like Abdullah Hasan bin Muhammad and Ali bin J'afar. The biggest golden fountain had a very beautiful floral pattern and embellishment brought by Ahmad the Greek and the priest Rabi'a from Constantinople. A fountain of green stone was brought from Syria. It was filled with twelve birds and animals having faces of gold and jewels. From the mouth and beak of every animal and bird would shoot out fresh water and the workmen displayed such skill and handicraft in the construction of the fountain that it left all those who viewed in wonder.



(*Qasr al-Khulafa'a*) Palace of the Caliphs was a part of this palace and was an amazing sight. Its roof was made of pure gold and transparent marble that one could look at like a mirror. A beautiful and jewel studded fountain was installed in the middle and upon its head was set the famous pearl presented to Abdur Rahman III by the king of Greece. Besides the fountain, a fountain-like tray was kept in the middle filled with mercury. The palace had around it very beautiful mirrors framed in ivory. Jewel studded doors of different kinds of woods were set in marble and crystal. When the doors were opened the house would be illuminated with the sun's rays, they were so bright that you could not look directly into them. The mercury would be set in motion in such a way that it looked as if the entire palace was moving and those unaware of its secret would experience fearfully the sensation that the palace was moving.

Thirteen thousand seven hundred and fifty servants and thirteen thousand three hundred eighty two Christian slaves were employed to serve and maintain this palace. Six thousand women served in the harem and twelve thousand loaves of bread in addition to other food were dropped in the reservoir just to feed the fish. "Zahra City" was such a unique palace that travelers from far off places and distant lands would visit this wonderful building to see the expanse of marble palaces within a palace, the splendor of the royal court, the orchards and beautiful settings where thousands of fountains, lakes and reservoirs flowed. The Arabs had turned the palace into the exhibition of their skills, construction work and handicraft. Unfortunately, when the Christians occupied Cordova, they razed Zahra palace to the ground, pulled down its mosques, demolished the tombs and even dug up its graves.

## Piety

Chief Justice Mundhir bin Sayeed has been referred to above. An event related about him is worth mentioning. Caliph Abdur Rahman III wanted to buy a house in Cordova. The house belonged to some orphan children who were entrusted to Justice Mundhir. When he was asked to sell the house to the Caliph, he refused point-blank to do so and sent word to the Caliph that the house could not be sold unless three conditions were fulfilled:



1. In case of dire need.
2. If destruction of property is feared.
3. If the property brings profit to the orphans.

But at present none of the three conditions are being fulfilled for the price offered by the royal officials was too little. The Caliph kept silent. Justice Mundhir feared that the Caliph might take the house and so he had the house pulled down. Afterwards, the official bought the land at double the price. When the Caliph came to know of this, he sent for the Justice and inquired about the reason for demolishing the house. He replied that when he had ordered demolition of the house he was thinking about the Quranic verse: So they both proceeded, until, when they embarked the ship, he (Khidr) scuttled it. Musa (Moses) said: "Have you scuttled it in order to drown its people? Verily, you have committed a thing *Imr* (a *Munkar* — evil, bad, dreadful thing)." (Q. 18:71)

Hearing this the Caliph kept silent and from that day, he began to show more respect for Justice Mundhir. This event brings to light the sense of piety of both the Caliph and the Chief Justice. The Justice died in 355 A.H. five years after the Caliph. The Caliph Abdur Rahman III died on Ramdan 2, 350 A.H. at the age of seventy-two and some months at the Zahra palace.

## **Land Revenue**

During the tenure of this Caliph twenty five million four hundred and eighty thousand dinars came to the royal treasury as land revenue while seven hundred and sixty-five thousand dinars were received through other sources. The whole income was spent on public welfare. The amount received by way of tribute and poll-tax collected from the Christians and the Jews was deposited with the main royal treasury out of which one-third was fixed as expenses for the Sultan and the rest was spent on construction of buildings, bridges, and roads.

## **Death of the Caliph**

Following the death of the Caliph some memoirs were found in his papers where he had penned the account of some days during the

fifty years of his life as a ruler when he had free time, they totaled only fourteen days. He left eleven sons at the time of his death Hakam bin Abdur Rahman was the crown prince.

### **Assessment of Abdur Rahman's Rule**

The period of Caliph Abdur Rahman III was the golden period of Islamic rule in Spain. The country enjoyed complete peace and trading activity was at its peak. The people of Spain had set up trade centers in far off places of Africa and Asia. The naval force was matchless and all the seas were practically ruled by the Caliph's navy. The Caliph never let his commanders and officials share royal powers and looked after all important administrative affairs himself. He gradually limited the powers of the Arab commanders and jurists and enhanced the powers and position of his sincere supporters and sympathizers. He built a squad of security guards from his personal slaves. Nothing remained out of his sight and he kept his eyes on everything big or small.

The most significant performance of the Caliph was the annihilation of feuds and group conflicts. Every party and group enjoyed the rights they deserved and none of them were hostile to the central rule. This was the secret of his success as a ruler and it is because of this that the entire world looked upon the Spanish Muslims with respect.

During the tenure of this Caliph, the non-Muslims, Christians and Jews, were treated very kindly and gently. The Christians living within the territorial bounds of Caliph Abdur Rahman III loved him no less than the Muslims.

He reminded the narrow-minded and rigid Muslim spiritual leaders of the kind treatment the Prophet of Islam (ﷺ) would give to the non-Muslims and he forced them to be aware of and put into practice the true spirit of the Qur'an and the Hadith. The Caliph succeeded in his mission.

The Caliph was not lacking in waging *jihad* and fighting against the enemies of Islam. His military actions were remarkable. In the fields of public welfare, social reforms, building construction and development of agriculture and economic progress and promotion of arts and literature he was unique.

During his period, not only Cordova but all of Spain had become a model of paradise. Not a piece of land was left uncultivated and there was an abundance of beautiful gardens, which turned the country into a bed of flowers. No city or town or village was lacking in beautiful and towering buildings. The Spain, which was the seat of anarchy and disorder turned into a center of peace and prosperity with his advent to the throne. The palatial buildings of Cordova and other cities far exceeded the splendor of Baghdad and Damascus. In comparison to Spain, all of Europe looked like a desert without a trace of culture or manners. The revenue of all the European kings put together did not equal that of Caliph Abdur Rahman III. The number of his registered troops reached one hundred and fifty thousand but the might of his paramilitary force was unknown. The personal security force of the Caliph consisted of eight thousand horsemen and four thousand infantry.

There was a network of roads and highways throughout the Spanish peninsula. Police posts were set up at short distances from each other to give protection to the wayfarers and a large number of police were deployed on patrol duty. Messengers would deliver the mail using a postal service based on a system of fast running horses. News from one place to another reached with amazing speed. Numerous towers were built to keep a watch over enemy activities. Construction of these buildings used large amounts of money from the royal treasury because they were constructed for the public welfare and safety. Such construction also provided jobs for both the skilled and unskilled laborers. As a result, the territories under Muslim occupation had the largest number of palaces, forts and bridges. Official houses were provided for the sick and destitute and they were taken care of by official expenditure. The entire country had orphanages where the orphans were brought up and educated and the Caliph personally bore their expenses.

The population of Cordova had reached one million during Caliph Abdur Rahman's rule. Neat and clean roads and streets, beautiful houses of marble, admirable drainage systems were some of the distinctive marks of his remarkable administrative acumen. He had set up a special department, which worked day and night, for keeping

the city clean. Attractive and graceful gardens dotted the city and the countryside. The city had approximately one hundred and thirteen thousand houses excluding palaces and citadels of the Caliph, Ministers and Nobles. Besides, the city had eighty thousand and four hundred shops, seven hundred mosques, nine hundred public baths and four thousand and three basement warehouses for preserving merchandise and commercial commodities. Cordova had men, garments and coins of from all countries. The city was twenty-four miles long and six miles wide and stretched along the banks of Guadalquivir (Wadi al Kabir). The main city was strongly fortified and covered an area of fourteen square miles. If anyone covered ten miles in a straight direction passing through the bazaars, he would find his path completely lighted by glittering lamps. No one could draw a parallel between Cordova and any other city on the earth. No other city had handwritten books and manuscripts in such large numbers, as Cordova possessed. Fresh mountain water entered the city through pipes, which covered a distance of two and half miles. A network of water pipes spread throughout the city. Every madrasa, mosque and inn had a separate set of pipes at their gate. Seven big gates of the city were kept locked. The city was divided into five parts within the fortifications each of them had their own separate fortification. Among those five parts, one was the royal palace. It had its own citadel where the caretakers of the royal administration lived. Not only in Cordova but all over Spain there were no beggars asking for alms. Sultan Abdur Rahman III had shifted to Zahra city during the last days of his rule. This city near Cordova had assumed a separate position and left Cordova behind in beauty and grandeur. Spain then abounded in fruits of all kinds, which were very cheap in the markets.

A large number of schools and colleges were running in the capital. Poetic symposia, intellectual gatherings and academic discussions were held in many places. These gatherings were patronized and attended by the princes, nobles and the Caliph himself. The presence of astronomers, physicians, philosophers, jurists, scholars of Hadith and commentators of the Qur'an enlightened Cordova. Boarding and lodging expenses of all the pupils were paid for from the royal

treasury. During the last days of his life, Caliph Abdur Rahman III had entrusted a greater part of the administration to the crown prince and began to devote most of his time to prayers.

Caliph Abdur Rahman III finally departed from Spain at a time when bordering Christian rulers had after the struggle and failure of a hundred years come to serve and obey the Islamic rule of Spain, even those Christian rulers who were far off from Cordova tried hard to win the pleasure of the Caliph. Abdur Rahman III passed away at a time when Morocco, the Mediterranean Sea and all other oceans were ruled by the royal fleet and the country was internally peaceful and safe.

### **Accession of Hakam bin Abdur Rahman III**

The third day after the demise of his father Caliph Hakam came to the throne of Spain at Zahra Palace on 5 Ramadan 350 A.H. at the age of forty eight years. Ministers, Commanders, Nobles and the pillars of the administration appeared before the new Caliph to offer their allegiance. They took the oath of allegiance after the Chief Justice and other judges followed by the Caliph's brothers and princes. The servants and slaves took the oath last of all. The accession of Hakam was celebrated with great pomp and show. Hakam adopted the appellation of (*Mustansir Billah*) "The one who is victorious by Allah."

### **A Review of the Administration**

Caliph Hakam took a review of all the administrative departments minutely. He visited the office of each minister, examined military registers and made himself aware of the number of soldiers serving the royal forces. He tried to gain knowledge about everything in his administrative organization although he was already aware of what was going on. Following this, he issued letters confirming every official and thus established his prestige as a shrewd and timely ruler.

### **Revolts of Bordering Christian States**

Caliph Hakam was extremely fond of reading books and acquiring knowledge since his childhood. When he ascended the throne of Spain, he was already mature and wise. Even great scholars and spiritual

leaders felt embarrassed when speaking before him. No country perhaps has ever had on its throne such a learned and erudite king. Since his love of learning and scholarly attitude had gained fame far and wide before he came to the throne, the Christian rulers thought that he would not be able to be a brave commander and so they began one by one to rise up in revolt against him.

The king of Castile began to make inroads into the bordering Islamic cities. Hakam led his forces against Castile and delivered a smashing defeat to the Christians and took the battle deep into Galicia.

But the audacious Castilians forgot the punishment and rose up again. Caliph Hakam sent his freed slave Ghalib at the head of the royal forces and directed him to chastise them harshly. Ghalib found the enemy forces much larger than his own however, he launched a fierce attack relying on Allah Almighty. The Christian forces were defeated and driven away and Ghalib came back after ravaging a greater part of Castile and pulling down their citadels.

Shortly after this event news about a revolt by Sancho and the Christian forces from Leon, Navarre and Castile concentrated their efforts to help him. Caliph Hakam directed Yala bin Muhammad, the ruler of Saragossa to punish the rebels. He took on the allied Christian forces all alone and defeated all of them and appeared before the Caliph with the captured booty. Yala bin Muhammad was still in Cordova when news about Barcelona's rebellion and also of war preparations by Castile reached Cordova. Caliph Hakam sent Ghalib to Barcelona and deputed Hudhayl bin Hashim to punish Castile. The Christians suffered a heavy setback and they had to confess their allegiance once again.

When Caliph Hakam gave his enemies a number of defeats during the very first phase of his rule that they all felt dejected and lost hope. They understood that Caliph Hakam II was not lacking in courage and determination. Frontier Christians showed open defiance but Yala bin Muhammad and Qasim bin Mutrif put them in order. The same year the Normans invaded the western coast of the Spanish peninsula and plundered the city of Lisbon. The Caliph ordered his Navy Commander Abdur Rahman to block the pirates and he himself marched at the head of an army against them. But the citizens of the

city had driven away the pirates from the land and sea before the Caliph and the Navy Commander appeared on the scene.

### **Awe-Struck Christian Rulers**

Ordone the cousin of Sancho and son-in-law of Ferdinand, the ruler of Castile was the ruler of Leon. When Caliph Abdur Rahman III restored Leon to Sancho, Ordone had gone to Ferdinand. Now Ordone along with twenty men from Galicia reached Salamanca city in 355 A.H. on the way to Cordova. But Ghalib, the caretaker of the northern borders stopped him because he was visiting Cordova without permission of the Caliph. Ordone, the former ruler of Leon argued that he considered himself an ordinary slave of the Caliph and was, therefore, going to appear before his master and needed no permission. However, Ghalib held him in Salamanca and informed the Caliph about Ordone. The Caliph granted him permission and sent a commander to welcome him to Cordova.

On entering Cordova, Ordone went to the tomb of Caliph Abdur Rahman III, got down from his horse, kept praying for a long time and moved ahead after offering his prostration to the departed Caliph. The Caliph allowed him to appear in the court in a white garment, which was considered a sign of honor among the Umayyads. Abdullah bin Qasim, the bishop of Toledo and Waleed bin Khairun, the magistrate of the Christians of Cordova had accompanied him. Appearing before the Caliph, Ordone was astonished and awe-stricken by the splendor and magnificence of the court and took off his cap in a state of bewilderment. However, his Companions escorted him towards the throne and he fell down in prostration before facing the Caliph. He then raised his head and moved ahead on his knees and lay prostrate once again. He reached the spot fixed for him lying in prostration repeatedly. At last, he sat in the chair put for him. Even though he made several attempts to utter something, he failed to be able to speak. The Caliph in view of his state of bewilderment kept silent for sometime and gave him time to collect himself. At last the Caliph broke his silence and said:

"O Ordone, I am happy to see you here. My royal favor will do the needful for you."

Having heard this remark from the Caliph, Ordone rose in a fit of joy and then fell down in prostration once again. He could say only this much "O my master, I am an ordinary slave of yours". Thereupon the Caliph said "I reckon you among the well-wishers of my rule and grant your petition. Do submit it if you have any desire". Hearing this Ordone fell down in prostration once again and lay in this state a little longer and then raised his head and submitted with all the humility at his command: "Sancho is my cousin. He appeared before the former Caliph in this very place. He had none to help him. His subjects were unhappy with him. The late Caliph granted his petition and made him king. I did not go against the order of the Caliph and left the country although the subjects were happy with me. I have now appeared with my heartfelt passion and a sense of respect for you and entreat you to grant my rights and restore my lost rule". Having heard this the Caliph said, "I understand your object. If your right to the throne is more than that of Sancho, you will be restored to your country. Hearing this Ordone fell down in prostration yet again. The Caliph adjourned the court and ordered an escort for Ordone to the guesthouse. On the way to the guesthouse, he saw a throne, which was used by the Caliph sometimes. Ordone bowed down before the vacant throne as if the Caliph was sitting upon it. Following this, the Prime Minister J'afar offered him a costly royal garment on behalf of the Caliph. After a few days, the Caliph sent Ordone back in the company of his commanders to have him seated on the throne. Shortly after that, Sancho and the heads of Zamora and Galicia sent petitions to the Caliph with costly presents to confess their loyalty. The rulers of Barcelona and Tarragona also followed suit.

Following this, the rulers of France, Italy and other Christian States started sending their emissaries to express their loyalty. The Christian ruler of western Galicia who had then grown powerful sent his mother to the Caliph to seek credentials for the rule of her son. The Caliph treated her honorably and conferred on her what she sought.

### **Revolt of the Moroccan Rule**

The Idrisid ruler of Morocco deputed by the Caliph rose in revolt in 361 A.H. The Caliph sent Yala bin Umayyah to Morocco. On hearing of the



invasion, the Moroccan ruler sought help from Muizz Ubaidi, of the Fatimid Dynasty, and he offered his allegiance to him. The fight between the two forces was fierce and Yala bin Muhammad was killed in action and the campaign suffered a setback.

Cordova was shocked to hear of this setback. The Caliph sent Ghalib to Morocco. With the arrival of Ghalib Hasan, the ruler of Morocco advanced to take him on. After a number of encounters, Ghalib forced Hasan to shut himself in a citadel and then he surrendered. The ruler of Morocco was then arrested and sent to Cordova. The Caliph treated him honorably and kept him as a guest with a daily allowance. After a short stay, he was sent to Alexandria as per his desire. Ghalib stayed in Morocco and fortified the administration and returned to Cordova in 363 A.H. with a large number of prisoners of war. He was accorded a warm royal welcome.

### **Crown Prince**

The Caliph appointed his son Hisham as crown prince in 365 A.H. and took from the nobles, ministers and courtiers their oath of allegiance for him.

### **Death**

Caliph Hakam II died of paralysis in Cordova on Safar 2, 366 A.H. at the age of sixty-four years after ruling for sixteen years. His son Hisham was then 11. He came to the throne the next day. Muhammad bin Abi Amir was made his Prime Minister as per the proposal of Caliph Hakam II.

### **Assessment of Caliph Hakam's Rule**

Caliph Hakam II of Spain was reckoned among the most eminent scholars. Had there been more engagements and campaigns, he would have established himself as a commander of the first rank. His forces quickly put down the few encounters and disturbances that did occur.

He passed the greater part of his time in academic engagements. His Prime Minister J'afar was equal to the Prime Minister of Caliph Harun

Ar-Rashid in ability and fame, J'afar Barmaki. Moreover, the Caliph had spared much of his time by increasingly entrusting important administrative affairs to his Prime Minister. During this period, religious fanaticism was absent and every person enjoyed complete freedom and the court of Cordova was free from narrow mindedness and low ideals. He was very particular about maintaining justice with the result that all his subjects were happy with him.

The Caliph observed Quranic injunctions strictly and made the Muslims keep to them. Prior to his administration, a section of the Muslim Spaniards had indulged in drinking but he had put a complete ban on making, selling and the using of wine. He spent a large amount daily on giving alms. Every city had schools and colleges. Students from foreign lands were treated as royal guests for the period they would be studying and acquiring knowledge. The Caliph appointed his brother Mundhir as the Head of the Education department.

### **Hakam's Love of Learning**

Caliph Hakam II was well versed in all the sciences. His agents kept moving in Damascus, Baghdad, Constantinople, Cairo, Makkah, Madinah, Kufa, and Basra and at places of learning and literature would purchase any or every good book for the Caliph that became known. Authors were persuaded to send their books to the Caliph and he encouraged scholars to come to Cordova and they were elevated to a high position and a place of abundant wealth. In every city, copyists were appointed to copy books for the Caliph. The Caliph had friendly relations with almost all the kings and rulers of the world and they had given facilities to Hakam's copyists and translators to provide rare books to him in any form.

The Caliph of Cordova gained fame far and wide as a great patron of the arts and learning. Even writers in Baghdad and Basra dedicated their books to the Caliph and sent them to him. Hundreds of scholars were deputed to translate books of Greek and Hebrew. The Caliph had created such an academic atmosphere all over the country that every house had a private library.

Not only Cordova but also every big city had a government library. Anyone who had a desire to be honored by the Caliph came to him with a rare and useful book.

### **Personal Library of Hakam**

The personal library of Caliph Hakam was in no way inferior to the royal palace in grandeur and magnificence. The building was made of marble with marble grounds and mosaic work of marble and black stone. Bookshelves were made of Sandalwood, ebony and other precious wood. Every bookshelf had written in golden letters the subjects of the books. The royal library had thousands of bookbinders and calligraphers. The numbers of books were more than six hundred thousands.

### **Catalogue of the Library**

The catalogue of the library books consisted of forty-four volumes. The catalogue had simply the names of the books and their authors. There was in the library hardly any book, which hadn't been gone through by the Caliph. Almost every book had marginal notes from the Caliph and the first page of each book had the names of the book and the author and the genealogy of the author in his handwriting. He had an extraordinary power of memory. He was a critic of the first rank and could write prose and poetry of all kinds with amazing ease.

### **Hakam's Books**

The Caliph was particularly very fond of history. He had himself penned the history of Spain but it was destroyed with the passage of time. Cordova had become the center of arts and learning during his tenure.

### **Honoring Scholars and Accomplished Persons**

Abu Ali Qali of Baghdad had come to Spain during the period of Abdur Rahman III. Sultan Hakam never allowed him to leave his company. Abu Bakr al-Arzaq, a renowned spiritual leader belonged to the family of Salmah bin Abdul Malik bin Marwan. He had reached Cordova in

349 A.H. and died in Cordova in 385 A.H. at the age of 58 years and was buried in Cordova. Caliph Hakam showed him great respect. Ismail bin Abdur Rahman bin Ali belonging to the family of Ibn Zam'a had come to Spain from Cairo and joined the circle of scholars. Thaqr al-Baghdadi and Qayas bin Amr were famous calligraphers and were held in esteem by the Caliph. Hakam had once sent one thousand Dinar each to Abul Farh Asfahani and Abu Bakr Maliki. Muhammad bin Mafraj was an accomplished scholar of Fiqh and Hadith. Ibn Mughith, Ahmad bin Abdul Malik, Ibn Hisham Al-qawi, Yusuf bin Harun, Abul Waleed Yunus and Ahmad bin Sayeed Hamdani were eminent poets. On the order of Caliph Hakam, Muhammad bin Yusuf Durrani wrote the history of Africa along with its geography. Isa bin Muhammad, Abu Umar Ahmad bin Faraj, Yaeesh bin Sayeed were famous historians and scholars in the court of Caliph Hakam.

### Favoring Scholars

An episode regarding Caliph Hakam's fondness of knowledge is worth mentioning. One day a fakih named Abu Ibrahim was delivering a sermon in the Abu Uthman Mosque. A royal mace-bearer came and asked the fakih (Jurist) to accompany him to the Caliph without loss of time and he was waiting outside. The fakih told him to tell the Caliph that he was engaged in a divine task and could not, therefore, go to him. The mace-bearer was astonished to get such an answer and conveyed to the Caliph the reply from the fakih with the utmost sense of fear. The Caliph asked the mace bearer to go and tell the fakih that he became happy to hear the reply and wanted him to visit the court only when his divine duty was over and until then he would be waiting for him in the court. Abu Ibrahim asked the mace-bearer to tell the Caliph that his old age allowed him neither to go riding nor on foot through the far off gate called Saddah Gate. However, if the nearby Sana Gate was opened for him he could make his entry into the court. That gate was usually kept closed and was opened only on special occasions. Abu Ibrahim resumed his sermon while the mace-bearer returned to him with the Caliph's answer, the mace-bearer politely sat through the sermon. When the sermon was over, the mace-bearer told him that Sana Gate was opened for him

and the Caliph was awaiting his arrival. When Abu Ibrahim arrived at the gate, he found the ministers and nobles there to accord him welcome. He went into the court, talked to the Caliph and came back honorably through the same gate.

### **Distinctive Characteristics of Hakam's Rule**

Hakam II may rightly be called the greatest Caliph of Spain. It is because during his period there was peace and order throughout and power, wealth, agricultural and commercial development was at its peak. But the progress of arts and learning had left everything else behind. During Hakam's tenure, the sun of learning had reached its meridian, even the Caliphs Harun, Mamun, or Mansur did not share this exclusive achievement. Caliph Hakam was fortunate enough to preside over a glittering assembly of scholars kings, and those powers patronizing the arts and learning. However, in spite of his amazing wisdom and learning he was overpowered with love for his son whom he appointed as his successor although he was only eleven years old at the time of his demise. One would have expected of Hakam II alone to have done away with the practice of hereditary rule but, unfortunately, he too could not break the malaise.

Caliph Hakam's brother Mughira would have been a better successor with his abilities to run the administration. But appointing his son, a minor as his crown prince and depriving Mughira of the throne, Hakam II gave the throne to the last Muslim Caliph of Spain. Although the Umayyad dynasty dragged on for sometime after the demise of Hakam II, it virtually came to an end with the end of his life.

### **Hisham II bin Hakam II and Mansur Muhammad bin Abi Aamir**

At the time of Caliph Hakam II's demise in 366 A.H. and the accession of his son Hisham II, the following persons held powerful positions in the Islamic Caliphate of Spain.

1. J'afar bin Uthman Mustafi, the Prime Minister. He held the post from the period of Caliph Hakam II. He was able, learned and respectable.

2. Queen Sabah, the Christian wife of Hakam and the mother of Hisham. She had much influence in the administration and was deeply loved by the Caliph.
3. Ghalib, the Commander-in-Chief of the Spanish forces. He was the freed slave of Hakam II and commanded the love of the troops and the citizens alike.
4. Muhammad bin Abi Aamir bin Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Aamir bin Muhammad Waleed bin Yazid bin Abdul Malik Ma'afri. His ancestor Abdul Malik Ma'afri had come to Spain in the company of Tariq bin Zeyad, the Conqueror of Spain.
5. Fa'iq, the (*khawaja sara*) eunuch and Commanding officer of the guards of the royal palace and inspector of the wardrobe.
6. Jodhar, the (*khawaja sara*) eunuch and caretaker of all the bazaars of Cordova. These two eunuchs were so powerful that even distinguished nobles feared them and tried to earn their pleasure.

### Consultations among the Leaders of the Court

Fa'iq and Jodhar were present when Caliph Hakam passed away. On the death of the Caliph, both of them were unanimous that the accession of prince Hisham was not safe and therefore Hakam's brother Mughira should be put on the throne for he alone could bear the burden of the caliphate. Jodhar was of the opinion that Prime Minister J'afar Mustafi should be assassinated so that the accession of Mughira might not be obstructed. But Fa'iq was in favor of taking Prime Minister J'afar Mustafi into confidence and if he differed with their opinion he would be put to death. J'afar was called in. When the news of Hakam's death was broken, he was informed of their point of view. The Prime Minister understood their intentions and promised to act according to their opinion. However, he pleaded for the participation of some other important persons as well. In this way, he deluded them and came out safely. Shortly after that, he called the leaders of the caliphate and informed them of the demise of the Caliph and the opinion of Fa'iq and Jodhar. He further advised to kill both Mughira and Hisham to put an end to all the controversies. All those present supported the decision but none of them rose to assassinate a

boy of such a tender age. Finally, Muhammad bin Abi Aamir stood up and went to the house of Mughira who was sleeping unaware of the death of his brother Hakam. When he woke up and heard of the demise of his brother, he grew very sad and expressed his intention to offer his allegiance to his nephew Hisham. When Muhammad bin Abi Aamir informed J'afar Mustafi of the loyalty of Mughira for Hisham, he suggested imprisonment for Mughira instead of assassination. J'afar threatened that he would send some other person to carry out his order if he (Abi Aamir) was unable to do the job. Having heard this Muhammad bin Abi Aamir assassinated Mughira.

### **Accession**

Hisham was then put on the throne. Fa'iq and Jodhar failed in their mission. They rose to create a stir among the people and drew their attention to the assassination of Mughira and a feeling of dissatisfaction overtook the country. Because of this, Christian tributaries of the northern frontiers attacked the Islamic areas furiously. In such a turbulent situation, Prime Minister J'afar did not prove his worth and embarrassed himself.

### **Muhammad bin Aamir as Adviser**

At last, at the instance of Queen Sabah, Muhammad bin Abi Aamir was made to share the administrative responsibilities with J'afar. In a few days Muhammad bin Abi Aamir prevailed over the administration and took over power from J'afar.

### **Muhammad bin Abi Aamir's life**

Muhammad bin Abi Aamir was born at Tarkash in Spain in 357 A.H. where his family was living. His ancestor Abdul Malik M'afari was a Yemenite soldier and most of his children received a military education. Muhammad bin Abi Aamir was still in his mother's womb when his father died in Tripoli on the return journey after performing Hajj. The young Muhammad bin Abi Aamir came to Cordova and joined a government madrasa. After completing his education, he adopted the profession of letter and petition writing in a rented shop adjoining the royal Palace. This was his only source of income. By chance, Queen

Sabah, the mother of Hisham needed a clerk to write down the accounts of her own property. A certain eunuch mentioned the name of Muhammad bin Abi Aamir and he was called to join the task. His skill and the recommendation of the Queen led him to be appointed as the collecting officer of Seville. Since he remained far away from Cordova, he approached the Queen to recommend his name to Caliph Hakam to have him appointed in Cordova. He was then appointed as manager of the mint. Muhammad bin Abi Aamir preformed well in this high office. He also kept Queen Sabah happy with presents and drew sympathy from the Prime Minister and other nobles as well. In short, he earned so much confidence that Caliph Hakam made him the instructor of his son Hisham before his death.

### Deeds of Muhammad bin Abi Amir

When Hisham came to the throne after the death of Caliph Hakam and the assassination of Mughira the entire administration came under the control of Prime Minister J'afar Mustafi. Ghalib was apparently considered a rival to J'afar. Queen Sabah was very deeply involved in the affairs of State. Everyone respected her and she was more sympathetic to Muhammad bin Abi Aamir. Muhammad bin Abi Aamir, first of all, broke the back of the eunuchs by persuading J'afar and Ghalib to take action against them. Fa'iq was exiled to Mallorca and he died there an unknown. Jodhar was forced to resign and their group was destroyed. It was in this situation that news came that the Christians of the North had refused to pay tribute and invaded the Muslim's territory. Prime Minister J'afar sent Muhammad bin Abi Aamir at the head of an army to punish the Christians. He gave a series of defeats to the Christians and returned safely. This victory enhanced the prestige of Muhammad bin Abi Aamir. The people of Cordova accorded him a warm welcome and his influence was strengthened. He joined hands with Ghalib and had Mustafi deposed and disgraced by putting him into prison where he died.

Since Ghalib was popular throughout the military, it was not easy to challenge him. Muhammad bin Abi Aamir launched a recruiting drive and admitted Christians of the northern hill areas and the Berbers from Morocco and Tripoli. Ibn Abi Aamir was now the unchallenged Prime Minister of Spain. However, he showed great respect for Ghalib



and married his daughter. He was not in danger of losing anything to Ghalib. Since Muhammad bin Abi Aamir was a very ambitious person, he did not want to share power with anybody else. As a matter of planning, he removed a part of the old army and the rest were deployed to unimportant fronts to disintegrate the organized power of the forces. He then gradually increased the number of forces and made new rules and regulations. In this way, he very cleverly weakened the position of Ghalib. Following this he also removed Ghalib from his way without any protest. Ibn Abi Aamir and Ghalib once exchanged hot words, which developed into an armed clash, with the result Ibn Abi Aamir received a minor wound and Ghalib fled to the Christian king Leon. On getting rid of his rivals, he put an end to the power of Queen Sabah and interned Hisham II in a part of the palace.

Hisham could not go out of the palace but he was provided with all the pleasures and luxuries of life. Nobody was permitted to see Hisham. Ibn Aamir then turned to his forces and won their love and support by giving them unparalleled facilities.

### Jihad against the Christians

He then waged *Jihad* (holy war) against the Christian States, annexed some of them while some others were punished so harshly that his name sent them into a state of terror. The matter became so serious that some Christian rulers and commanders joined his force and played an active role in ravaging the Christian States and started to pull down churches on their own. However, Abi Aamir stopped them from desecrating the churches and destroying them. He then turned to Africa and expanded the Spanish territories there. He waged *Jihad* fifty six times and won every battle. During the last days, he adopted the appellation "Mansur" and came to be known as Mansur the Great.

### Death

While returning from the last *Jihad* in Castile in 394 A.H., he died in Salamanca after ruling for twenty-seven years.

### **Assessment of Muhammad bin Abi Aamir's Rule**

Mansur the Great preferred to be called the Prime Minister of Spain even though he acted as a sovereign ruler in all the affairs of the country. He built a palace at a distance of few miles from the Cordova palace, which was like a citadel. He carried all his offices and treasures to this stronghold. Addresses were delivered in the name of Hisham along with Muhammad bin Abi Aamir. Nobles and the leaders of the caliphate showed him the same respect as they did to the Umayyad Caliphs.

Ibn Abi Aamir's presence was a blessing to Spain and the Muslim rule in Spain. He made Leon and the principalities around it a part of the Cordova caliphate. He succeeded in making Barcelona, Castile and Navarre tributaries of Cordova. Once an emissary of Ibn Aamir visited a Christian State whose leader was called Garcia. Garcia accorded him a warm welcome and led him on a tour of his whole country. During the tour, the emissary found out that a Muslim lady was being kept prisoner by some monks. On his return while relating to the Caliph the condition of the State visited by him, he referred to the woman in confinement. Mansur the Great led an army against that state immediately. When he reached near Garcia's territory, Garcia came out submissively and begged to know whether he had committed any wrong. Mansur told him that in spite of his promise that his state would not keep any Muslim prisoner a Muslim woman was in confinement in a certain church. Garcia released the woman at once and pulled down the Church.

Mansur the Great marched to Coria city on 24 Jamad al-Awwal 387 A.H. and after conquering it entered into Galicia. The Christian Commanders rushed to seek employment. He took with him those newly employed Christian Commanders and marched along the coastal areas punishing the audacious elements and demolishing their citadels and conquered some small islands in the Atlantic Ocean. After conquering the coastal cities of France and demolishing the buildings functioning as the centers of conspiracies he came back to Cordova. This was his forty eighth Jihad.

## Showing Regard to Learning

Mansur the Great was very fond of learning like his predecessor Caliph Hakam II. He was himself a scholar and held scholars in esteem. His childhood class fellows grew jealous of his glory and grandeur. They hatched a plot against their Caliph and charged him with being inclined to philosophy and atheism. But Mansur denied the allegation by convening a meeting of the religious scholars. He built a number of bridges, extended Cordova mosque and added to the welfare and prosperity of his subjects. He led his forces where no Muslim ruler had ever reached. His name sent terror into the hearts of the Christians more than anybody else's did. He rose to the pinnacle of power and glory. He commands a place of highest distinction among the most respectable and ambitious men in history. When he died in 394 A.H., the Umayyad dynasty was taking its last breath due to the ineptitude of Caliph Hisham II but its glory had touched a new high.

When the news of Mansur's demise reached Cordova, the well wishers and supporters of the Umayyads grew happy to think that Caliph Hisham II, virtually a pawn, would now be able to take his place as the sovereign ruler. Some of them called on Hisham to give him the "good news" of Mansur's death but Hisham was shocked and frustrated. When Mansur's elder son Abdul Malik came to Cordova to bury his father, Hisham called him and made him Prime Minister of the Muslim State and conferred on him the title of "Muzaffar", the victorious. Muzaffar followed in the footstep of his father and died in 399 A.H. after ruling for six years. Muzaffar invaded the Christian countries eight times and every time he came back victorious. The arts and learning flourished during his period and the power and awe the rule established during the tenure of his father was not diminished in the least.

On the death of Muzaffar his brother Abdur Rahman bin Mansur also known as Abdur Rahman Sanchuelo, became the Prime Minister and adopted "Nasir" as his appellation. Even though both Muzaffar and his father Mansur were the real sovereign rulers of Spain, they liked to simply be called the Prime Minister of the state. However, in view of the wide support for Nasir in the court, with the commanders and the

friends of his father, he proclaimed his sovereignty and began to show slackness in paying his respect to the Caliph.

Following this Nasir forced Hisham to proclaim him as the successor of the caliphate. Thus, Hisham put his signature on a paper prepared by Nasir who circulated it among the Governors of all Muslim provinces. The royal proclamation described Nasir as a man from a respectable family commanding qualities of mind and spirit. The proclamation was made in the Grand Mosque of Cordova as well. Although Nasir was very happy with this development in his favor, this elevation in his position as the successor of the Caliph proved fatal for him.

### **Hisham's Deposition**

In the very first year of his tenure Nasir, following the practices of his predecessors, led his forces against the frontier Christians. The Quraish and the Umayyad felt aggrieved at the transfer of power from the Umayyads to another family. Due to this, they secretly began to arouse the people in support of the Umayyads. When Nasir was fighting on the northern frontier along with his forces, they killed his military officers in Cordova. They installed Muhammad bin Hisham bin Abdul Jabbar bin Caliph Abdur Rahman III, the great grandson of Caliph Abdur Rahman III with the title of "Mahdi Billah". Installing Mahdi, they deposed Caliph Hisham II. Nasir marched to Cordova but as he came near to it most of his Commanders and Berber soldiers deserted him and joined the camp of the Caliph Mahdi. When Nasir was left with a very small number of troops, one of his companions put him to death. His head was sent to Caliph Mahdi. Thus, the rule of Bari Aamir ended and Spain fell prey to anarchy.

### **Mahdi bin Hisham bin Abdul Jabbar**

In view of the desire of the people Hisham II undertook his deposition in writing for the second time. Muhammad bin Hisham addressed as Mahdi interned him in a part of the palace, brought to the throne his cousin Muhammad bin Mughira and appointed another cousin Umayyah bin al-Haaf as the police chief of Cordova. Following this he sent his forces towards the city of Mansur the Great and his palace. The

citizens opened the gates of the city without any resistance. Caliph Mahdi's forces razed the palace and the other buildings to the ground. This event took place in 399 or 400 A.H. Following the event of Nasir's assassination and the end of the rule of Ibn Abi Amir's dynasty and as the fourth Islamic century and three centuries of Islamic rule in Spain approached its end the doors of anarchy opened.

## **Military Rule**

The Berber troops had played a major role in the deposition of Caliph Hisham II and the installation of Caliph Mahdi. They were involved with the Quraish and the Umayyads in the process of the change of power and they dominated the scene in the administrative affairs of Caliph Mahdi. The reins of actual power came to the military, which began to perpetrate a reign of terror on the people. Finally, the people lodged a complaint to the Caliph. However, the Caliph paid no heed to their grievances for fear of the displeasure of the military. Thus, even those who played an active role in bringing Mahdi to power turned hostile against him and began to find ways and means of getting rid of his passive rule. Being fed up with the atrocities of the Berbers the people killed a few of them and Caliph Mahdi killed the killers in retaliation. The situation became worse, with the different factions looking for any Umayyad prince to be the figurehead of their faction to lend authenticity to their claims.

## **The Plot against Mahdi**

Caliph Mahdi was devoted to breaking the back of the Berber's power. However, they got wind of the secret planning of the Caliph against them and as a counter measure, they set prince Hisham bin Sulaiman bin Abdur Rahman III against Mahdi by tempting to give him the throne if he helped in deposing the Caliph. When the plot was unearthed, Caliph Mahdi arrested Hisham bin Sulaiman and his brother Abu Bakr and killed them in order to curb the trouble.

## **Flight from Death of Sulaiman bin Hakam**

On hearing the news of the assassination of these two relatives one Umayyad prince Sulaiman bin Hakam fled Cordova for safety. The

Berbers were looking outside Cordova to find a person to replace the present Caliph. When Sulaiman bin Hakam approached, they grew very happy. They lost no time in proclaiming him as the Caliph under the title "Musta'in Billah" and persuaded him to launch an attack on Cordova. Sulaiman bin Hakam counseled against any hasty steps and pleaded in favor of increasing their military strength. With this plan in mind Sulaiman, bin Hakam, known as Musta'in went to Toledo and appointed Ahmad bin Naseeb as his Prime Minister.

## Civil War

Musta'in took troops from Toledo and marched to Salamanca. Mahdi sent his slave Qaisar at the head of a squadron of horsemen to help Wadah Aamiri, a commander of the northern provinces and the freed slave of Mansur bin Abi Aamiri. Qaisar was killed during the fight and Wadah closed himself inside the fort.

## Sulaiman & Mahdi both seek Help from the Christian King

In view of failing to win the battle and the shortage of provisions Musta'in wrote the Christian king Ibn Alfonso to supply food and forces so that he could conquer Cordova and take the Caliphate. On hearing this news, Mahdi also sought help from the Christian king with the promise of handing over all the frontier forts and cities to him. However, the Christian king preferred Musta'in and sent him one thousand oxen, fifteen thousand goats and other necessary provisions accompanied by Christian forces. Now Musta'in marched to Cordova instead of fighting with Wadah. Wadah also marched behind Musta'in but he committed a blunder by attacking Musta'in's force. In the wake of a bloody battle, Mahdi's army was defeated losing twenty thousand of his men. He fled to Toledo with the rest of his troops while Musta'in entered Cordova victoriously. Since the victory was won with the military support of the Christians, they were warmly welcomed although a large number of Muslim scholars and intellectuals were killed by these savage Christian troops. Caliph Mahdi once again wrote to the Christian king from Toledo and sought his military help. This was an excellent opportunity to set Muslim against Muslim and weaken their power and unity. Mahdi attacked

Cordova with the help of some Christian troops. After a bloody battle, Musta'in was defeated while Mahdi entered Cordova victoriously and regained his throne. The Christian forces, which had been with Musta'in, joined the camp of Mahdi. This battle took a heavy toll on the Muslims. Musta'in left Cordova and stormed through the rest of the country. The Christian troops on the other hand let loose a reign of terror against the Muslims of Cordova, while Mahdi fell into a life of pleasure and luxury. Thus Spain, which had been enjoying peace and order, became a center of looting, arson and anarchy.

### **Deposition of Mahdi**

Wadah Aamiri was an ally of Mahdi but when he noticed the country was in jeopardy he indulged in extensive consultation with the influential persons of Cordova about the deposition of Mahdi and the restoration of the throne to Caliph Hisham II. They had Mahdi assassinated by a slave in the open court and Hisham II was taken out of prison and put on the throne once again.

### **Peace with the Christian King**

Wadah Aamiri, the freed slave of Mansur bin Abi Aamiri, became the Prime Minister. Wadah sent the head of Mahdi to Musta'in and wrote to him that Caliph Hisham had come to the throne once again and it was proper for him to offer his allegiance to the Caliph. But Musta'in rejected the message with contempt and Musta'in invaded Cordova with the help of the Christian king Alfonso. Cordova was surrounded after the adjoining areas were ravaged.

Being fed up with the long siege and in order to bring about a separation between the Christian king and Musta'in, Hisham II gave away two hundred citadels and a few big cities adjoining the Christian kingdom. He signed a peace treaty with the Christian king who broke his relations with Musta'in. But Musta'in continued the siege with the result that the stress of the trial of strength began to show on both sides. Sometimes the citizens of Cordova would drive away the Berbers and at times, the Berbers would make progress into the city. The Christian powers took advantage of this disturbing situation and took away a number of States from Cordova.

## **End of Hisham**

At last Musta'in occupied Cordova in Shawal in 403 A.H. Hisham II was either killed or had disappeared without leaving any trace behind. Wadah Aamiri had already been killed a few days prior. Musta'in thus came to the throne of Cordova.

## **Musta'in Billah**

Musta'in was now the Caliph of Cordova. But various provinces had become independent of the central rule of Cordova. Ibn Ubad began to rule in Seville, Ibn Aftas in Badajoz, Ibn Abi Aamir in Valencia and Murcia, Ibn Hud in Saragossa and Mujahid Aamiri in Denia and Alzira. The northern Christian states took full advantage of the turbulent situation. Every Christian State annexed the territories adjoining it. The era of anarchy took hold of the Islamic caliphate, which was torn into pieces.

## **Assassination of Musta'in**

Musta'in ruled Cordova and its suburbs till Muharram, 407 A.H. and after ruling nominally for a period of three years and a few months Musta'in was arrested and killed shortly after being defeated on a battleground adjoining Seville. This led to the end of the Umayyad rule.

## **End of the Umayyad Rule**

Although the rule of the Umayyad dynasty had come to an end in 407 A.H. with the assassination of Musta'in some of the Umayyads tried to regain power and in some cases gained nominal success, by 408 A.H. the end was complete. Ali bin Humud came to the throne in 407 A.H. after killing Musta'in. He and his brother ruled Cordova until 413 A.H. Ibn Jumud's rule ended in 413 A.H. and Abdur Rahman bin Hisham bin Abdul Jabbar, the brother of Mahdi came to the throne in Ramadan 414 A.H. with the support of the people of Cordova. He adopted the title of "Mustahzir". Within two months Muhammad bin Abdur Rahman bin Ubaidullah bin Abdur Rahman won the throne of Cordova and began to rule with "Mustakfi" as his title.



Yahya bin Ali bin Humud attacked Cordova in 416 A.H. and Ali bin Humud fled to the North and died there. Yahya bin Ali bin Humud continued to rule in Cordova until 417 A.H. But Prime Minister Abu Muhammad Janhur bin Muhammad bin Janhur took the oath of allegiance from Hisham bin Muhammad the Umayyad in his absence. Hisham bin Muhammad was with Ibn Hud in Lerida. Having heard of the allegiance to him, he shifted to Bidant. He stayed there for three years and adopted the title "Mutamid Billah". When the nobles clashed with one another, Hisham bin Muhammad was brought to Cordova and they installed him as their ruler. But the troops rose against him in 422 A.H. and deposed Hisham bin Muhammad. Hisham came to Lerida and died in 428 A.H. with the end of Hisham bin Muhammad ended even the nominal caliphate.

### **Assessment of the Umayyads**

Abdur Rahman I had laid the foundation of his rule in Spain in 138 A.H. This rule lasted for two hundred ninety years and met its end in 428 A.H. with the death of Hisham bin Muhammad. Among the progeny of Abdur Rahman I there were a few ambitious and adventurous rulers who made Spain the pride of all countries. They not only made the country advanced and prosperous but developed arts and learning to such an amazing extent that the whole world praises them even to this day. Europe owes most of its progress in the realm of arts and learning to Muslim Spain. The Spanish Caliph had burnt the candle of learning that enlightened all of Europe. The might and grandeur of the Muslim rulers of Spain had made them a terror to the Europeans who would go down to any level to win the pleasure of the Muslim Caliphs. The sole reason behind the annihilation of the Muslim rule in Spain was the rulers making a distance between themselves and the Islamic Code and the sublime teachings and character of the Prophet (ﷺ). Islam was totally against the concept of dynastic rule. However, the Muslims later made the transfer of the rule to be hereditary, as was the practice before Islam. The Prophet (ﷺ) had done away with this practice but the Muslims later embraced this evil practice with the result inept and unworthy persons came to power. A negligent way of following the injunctions of the Qur'an and the Code of Islam resulted in disunity in Muslim ranks and constant infighting, which strengthened the powers hostile to the Muslims.

## Chapter 6

# **Bani Hamud's (Hammudid's) Rule**

The Idrisid dynasty referred to above was founded in Morocco during the caliphate of Harun Rashid Abbasi and it had already become extinct. Two full brothers, Ali and Qasim, accompanied the Berbers who had come to Spain from Morocco during the period of Ibn Abi Aamir. These two were the sons of Hamud bin Maimun bin Ahmad bin Ali bin Ubaidullah bin Umar bin Idris. Ali and Qasim were descendents of the founder of the Idrisid dynasty and they joined the services of Ibn Ali Aamir's forces. They fought valiantly against the Christians and Ibn Abi Aamir was very happy to appoint them as officers in the army. As high-ranking officers of the Berber regiment, they enjoyed support and satisfaction of the soldiers particularly because their dynasty in Morocco had been very influential. These two brothers played a pivotal role in uprooting Ibn Abi Aamir's rule and made Musta'in the Umayyad Caliph of Spain. On coming to the throne in Cordova Musta'in appointed Ali bin Hamud the Governor of Tangiers and other provinces.

## **Ali bin Hamud**

Since various provinces had been proclaiming their independent rule during the short tenure of Musta'in, Ali bin Hamud also declared himself a sovereign ruler of Tangiers. He later forged an alliance with Khairan, the Governor of Almeria and sent a force to Spain. He deputed his son Yahya in Tangiers and he marched to Cordova and spread the rumor that he had come to avenge the blood of Caliph Hisham II. Musta'in fought Ali bin Hamud on the battlefield of Malaga. In Muharram, 407 A.H. Musta'in suffered a smashing defeat. Ali marched ahead and captured Cordova, killed Musta'in and sat on the throne with the title "*Nasir-Li-Dinillah*". Since Ali bin Hamud enjoyed the support of the Berbers, he had no opposition. The earlier part of Ali bin Hamud's rule was graceful for he tended to keep justice but later he turned his people against himself. He started levying tax after tax on the people with the result that both the military and the civilians turned against him. In view of this development, Khairan the Governor of Almeria recognized Abdur Rahman bin Muhammad as the king of Spain.

## **Assassination of Ali bin Hamud**

Ali bin Hamud had some Saqlabi among his special slaves. These slaves were supported by Khairan who was from the Saqlabi (former slaves) and they killed Ali bin Hamud in the bathroom in 408 A.H.

## **Qasim bin Hamud**

The people generally rejoiced at the assassination of Ali bin Hamud. In spite of this, the Berbers called Qasim bin Hamud the brother of Ali bin Hamud to Cordova from Algeciras and put him on the throne. However, the Berber regiment was in favor of Yahya the son of Ali. Khairan Saqlabi on the other hand toured the country along with Abdur Rahman bin Muhammad and the people started favoring Abdur Rahman but a few days later the Governor of Granada, a Berber Commander killed Abdur Rahman bin Muhammad on the battlefield.

Yahya bin Ali, the Governor of Malaga, had a brother named Idris bin Ali bin Hamud. After winning the support of his brother, he entered the territory of Spain by ship and staked his claim to the throne in opposition to his uncle. Khairan Saqlabi joined Yahya even though Idris, the brother of Yahya brought to his attention the mischievous nature of Khairan but Yahya ignored it saying that he could benefit from his help at the time. Yahya marched on Cordova with his army and Qasim fled from there and took refuge in Seville with Qadi Ibn Ubad.

### **Yahya bin Ali bin Hamud**

Qasim fled from Cordova on 1 Jamad al-Awwal 410 A.H. and Yahya bin Ali sat on the throne unopposed with "Mut'ali" as title. Yahya made himself to be the ruler of Spain after coming on the throne of Cordova although nobody recognized him as the ruler outside of Cordova because everyone else had already declared their own sovereignty. The negligence and stupidity of Yahya led the people to rise up against him and many commanders of the Cordova forces went to Seville to persuade them to invade Cordova. Upon being aware of these developments, Yahya grew so afraid that he fled to Malaga.

### **Qasim Re-Enthroned**

With this news Qasim came to Cordova in 413 A.H. and began to rule it. Yahya began to rule in Malaga. But his brother wrested power from him and he (Yahya) shifted to Tangiers. Thus Cordova came to be ruled by Qasim, Malaga by Idris and Tangiers by Yahya bin Ali.

### **Massacre of the Umayyad**

The Berber chiefs grew displeased with Qasim before long. The people of Cordova on the other hand began to think of an Umayyad prince they could put on the throne. But Qasim started killing and arresting the Umayyads without discrimination. The people raised their voice against these atrocities. Qasim used the Berber force to put down the insurgence of the citizens. The citizens rose up as one man and drove away Qasim and his troops by defeating them openly. The Berber troops conceded defeat and fled to Malaga while Qasim went to

Seville. Qasim had made his son the Governor of Seville and appointed Muhammad bin Ziri and Muhammad bin Ubad as his advisers. When they heard of Qasim's return after his setback they shut the doors of Seville and decided to fight him. Qasim stayed outside the city and sent word to the chiefs to send his son out so that they could leave for anywhere else. They sent out his son and his other relatives. Qasim took his relatives along with his Negro slave and took refuge in Sarish Fort but Yahya bin Ali conquered the Sarish Fort in 415 A.H. and put Qasim in prison. In 427 A.H., Qasim was killed by the order of Yahya.

### **Abdur Rahman bin Hisham**

When Qasim left for Seville after his defeat, Cordova remained without a ruler. During this period, three princes staked their claim to the throne. The people of Cordova elected Abdur Rahman bin Hisham to the throne with "Mustazhir" as his title. On coming to the throne, he set Abu Imran, a Berber free against the will of his ministers and appointed him as his Commander. But a plot hatched by Abu Imran led to Mustazhir's assassination on 3 Dhul Qada 414 A.H.

### **Muhammad bin Abdur Rahman bin Abdullah Mustakfi**

Muhammad bin Abdur Rahman bin Abdullah sat on the throne with "Mustakfi" as his title. Yahya bin Ali bin Hamud who had already arrested his uncle, Abul Qasim and conquered Sarish, Malaga and Algeciras marched on Cordova. Mustakfi grew so terrified that he fled to the northern borders and died there on 25 Rabia al-Awwal 416 A.H. Yahya entrusted Cordova to an officer named Ibn Ataf and left to Malaga and started military preparations to conquer Seville. Shortly after that, the people of Cordova drove away Ibn Ataf and his troops from Cordova.

Among the people of Cordova was one very influential person named Abu Muhammad Jamhur bin Muhammad. Advised by this person the people of Cordova accepted Hisham bin Muhammad staying at Lerida as their Caliph. He was not able to arrive in Cordova for three years. However, he came to Cordova in 420 A.H. and ascended the throne with "Mutamid Billah" as his title. Two

years after the people and troops of Cordova deposed and drove him away in 422 A.H. and he went back to Lerida and lived there until 428 A.H. Yahya bin Ali surrounded Seville and kept Cordova under threat. On the departure of Hisham from Cordova, the people declared their allegiance to Yahya. Yahya made Seville obey him in 426 A.H. Thus, Yahya bin Ali became one of the stronger leaders in this state of anarchy. Abu Qasim bin Ubad, the ruler of Seville died the same year. His son Mu'tazid succeeded him. Seville took up arms once again and Yahya bin Ali attacked Seville but was killed. This event took place in 427 A.H. With the killing of Yahya bin Ali, his supporters shifted to Malaga the center of his power. Idris bin Ali ascended the throne with the title "Mu'taid Billah." Abu Muhammad Jamhur set up a democratic rule and the members of the Council elected him as its president and Cordova came back to peace and order. Idris bin Ali formed an alliance with the Governors of Carmona and Almeria and invaded Seville. This campaign covered a period of three or four years during which Idris bin Ali passed away in 431 A.H. Some of the Commanders made an attempt to bring his son Yahya bin Idris to the throne of Malaga while others accepted the claim of Husain bin Yahya, the governor of Ceuta. Finally, the latter came from Ceuta and ascended the throne under the title "Mustansir". But Husain's cousin the daughter of Idris poisoned him to death. From that time, Malaga was ruled by the slaves and servants of their family.

### **Idris bin Yahya Hamudi**

At last Idris bin Yahya bin Ali bin Hamud occupied the throne of Malaga in 443 A.H. Granada and Carmona States offered their allegiance to him. Idris bin Yahya adopted "Aali" as his title and entrusted Ceuta's rule to his father's slaves Sukut and Zarqullah. Muhammad bin Ali bin Hamud revolted in 448 A.H. and Idris bin Yahya suffered a defeat and fled to Carmona. Muhammad bin Idris ascended the throne in Malaga under the title of "Mahdi" and appointed his brother "Sanai" his successor. Muhammad bin Idris died in 449 A.H. and with his death, Idris bin Yahya ascended the throne again. He died in 450 A.H.

### **Muhammad Asghar-the Last King of Hamud Dynasty**

After this Muhammad Asghar bin Idris bin Ali bin Hamud sat on the throne of Malaga. Baris bin Habus, the king of Granada invaded Malaga and dislodged Muhammad Asghar from Malaga. Muhammad Asghar came to Almeria and stayed there in a state of frustration. On the request the people of Melilla (Africa) he went there and ruled until 460 A.H. Muhammad Asghar was the last king of the Hamud dynasty who ruled Malaga until 451 A.H. Qasim bin Muhammad entitled "Wathiq Billah" ruled over the province of Algeciras until 450 A.H. He also belonged to the Hamud family. Mu'tazid bin Abul Qasim bin Ubad, the ruler of Seville occupied Algeciras in 450 A.H. and arrested Muhammad. This was the end of Hamud dynasty in Spain.

## Chapter 7

# **State of Anarchy**

### **Banu Abbad, Banu Dhun'nun, Banu Hud etc.**

The rule of the Umayyads came to an end with the end of the fourth century Hijrah. We have covered a period up to 450 A.H. while dealing with the Hamud dynasty although Hamud only ruled some small territories of the Spanish peninsula. There were other contemporary dynasties, which had sovereign rule over separate parts of the peninsula. Since their coverage will not consume much space, we are mentioning them as a whole. We have chosen only those who exemplify the realities of the era and maintain the continuity of the historical events. The separately ruled states had their beginning when the Northern Christian powers were making a total effort to expand their territories and took advantage of the situation by setting one Muslim ruler against another.

### **Seville and Western Spain (Banu Abbad or Abbadids)**

Among the Abbad was a man named Muhammad bin Ismail bin Quraish of the town of Tashana who would lead the prayers. His son Ismail was appointed minister in the court of Seville in 413 A.H.



Ismail bin Muhammad's son Abul Qasim Muhammad became the Qadi and Minister of Seville. When Qasim bin Hamud came to Seville, Abul Qasim Muhammad the Qadi of Seville and Muhammad bin Zubairi blocked his entry into the city.

### **Abul Qasim Muhammad**

Shortly after that, Abul Qasim Muhammad turned Muhammad bin Zubairi out of Seville and occupied Seville on his own. Qasim bin Hamud left for Carmona where Muhammad bin Abdullah Barzali had set up his sovereign rule in 404 A.H. After a short time Qasim bin Hamud left for Fort Sarish and Muhammad bin Abdullah continued his rule in Carmona.

### **Abu Umar Abbad**

Abu Umar Abbad ascended the throne of Seville after his father Abul Qasim Muhammad and called himself "Mu'tazid". Mu'tazid fought several battles with Muhammad bin Abdullah, the ruler of Carmona. Ismail bin Qasim bin Hamud killed Muhammad bin Abdullah and captured Carmona. Shortly after that Ismail went to Algeciras and Carmona was occupied by Muhammad bin Abdullah's son Aziz known as Mustazhir. A short time later Mu'tazid conquered Carmona, Sarish, Arcos, and Ronda. Abdul Aziz Bakari was the sovereign ruler of Adinah and Silves. Mu'tazid, the ruler of Seville invaded his territories but Ibn Jauhur, the Prime Minister of Cordova intervened and brought peace between the two. Soon after the death of Ibn Jauhur, Mutazid conquered Adinah and Silves and sent his son Mu'tamid to rule over the annexed territories. Muzaffar, the ruler of Setubal died in 422 A.H. and Mu'tazid annexed Setubal too in 443 A.H. by dislodging Muzaffar's son.

Abul Abbas Ahmad bin Yahya had set up his rule in Lablah in 414 A.H. He died in 433 A.H. and was succeeded by his brother Muhammad bin Yahya. Mu'tazid invaded Lablah. Muhammad bin Yahya left Lablah and joined his nephew Fath bin Khalaf bin Yahya in Cordova. Mu'tazid occupied Cordova too in 445 A.H. He also wrested Almeria from Rashiq and Martelah from Ibn Taighar and gradually expanded his territories and thus established the rule of the Abbads. Badis bin Habus had set up his rule in Granada. But Badis bin Habus and Mu'tazid clashed with one another and the matter was still undecided when Mu'tazid died in 461 A.H.

## **Mu'tamid bin Mu'tazid bin Ismail**

He was succeeded by his son Mu'tamid bin Mu'tazid bin Ismail. Mu'tamid too, like his father, started expanding his territories. Badis bin Habus conceded to the supremacy of Mu'tamid. Ferdinand, the Christian King of Castile and Leon because of the fighting among the Muslims took advantage of the opportunity and attacked Seville with full force. The Muslim rulers had in order to overpower their Muslim rivals agreed to pay tribute to Ferdinand and seek his help. Mu'tazid also agreed to pay tribute to the Christian king to avoid his expected attack. Ferdinand I died in 458 A.H. He was succeeded by his son Alfonso VI. He was very arrogant. Mu'tamid fortified his military strength by 468 A.H. and stopped paying tribute to the Christian king.

### **Alfonso's Plunder of Islamic Cities**

Besides Banu Abbad in western Spain some chieftains were also having territories under their sovereign rule. Those independent of Banu Abbad had gone under the influence of the Christian king. Alfonso VI had grown very strong by plundering Islamic cities and receiving tribute from the Muslim Chiefs. He built a huge force and wrested Toledo from Qadir, the last king of Bani Dhun'nun in 478 A.H. He then became a source of trouble to all the Muslim States.

### **Alfonso demanding Tribute**

Alfonso's Jewish emissary Ibn Shalib called on Mu'tamid and demanded tribute. Mu'tamid gave it immediately. But the emissary sent it back to Mu'tamid saying that he would not accept silver coins and wanted the tribute in gold ones. On receiving this message, Mu'tamid called the emissary and punished him by driving nails into his hands and feet. Finding himself on the point of death, he entreated that in case he was forgiven he was ready to give him gold equal to his weight. But Mu'tamid paid no heed and killed the emissary and arrested those accompanying him. Mu'tamid was now sure of Alfonso's invasion. Alfonso grew very furious when he found out about the death of his emissary. The Muslims on the other hand were so strife-torn that they could not save Spain from Christian occupation.

## **Mu'tamid Seeks Yusuf bin Tashfain's Help**

In view of the looming disaster Mu'tamid told Yusuf bin Tashfain, the ruler of Morocco that without his help Islamic rule in Spain would meet its doom. Yusuf bin Tashfain was a renowned and victorious king. On the request of Mu'tamid, he rushed to Spain and reached Seville. Alfonso also marched to Seville from the other side.

## **Historical Battle with the Christians**

On the Battleground of Zallacca both forces came face to face in 480 A.H. (October 23, 1086 C.E.). The joint army of Yusuf bin Tashfain and Mu'tamid went up to twenty thousand while the Christian army had sixty thousand troops ready to fight. This battle is reckoned among the most significant battles of Spain because it fortified the Muslims power in Spain for several hundred years and they became a terror for the Christians once again. The dimensions of fighting may be measured from the simple fact that, according to Ibn Athir (The famous historian), Alfonso VI escaped from the battlefield with not more than three men while the rest fell fighting. In the wake of such a major victory the Muslims gained an opportunity to put their ranks right but this hope was not to be realized. Shortly after the return of Yusuf bin Tashqain to Morocco, large-scale infighting started among the nobles and chiefs of Spain once again. Even though Mu'tamid was fond of learning and was a patron of the scholars with the conquest of Zallacca his style of life took a change for the worse. Yusuf bin Tashfain came to Spain once again and instructed his governor in Spain to keep an eye on the troublemakers and later he annexed Spain. He arrested Mu'tamid and confined him at Aghinat in Morocco where he died after four years in 488 A.H. Thus came the end of Bari Abbad's rule.

## **Banu Aftas Rule in Badajoz**

In the wake of Spain being taken over by disorder Abu Muhammad Abdullah bin Maslama, commonly known as Ibn Aftas, occupied Badajoz and declared his sovereignty. After his death, his son Abu Bakr Muzaffar succeeded him. He was involved in fighting with Banu Dhun'nun and Banu Abbad and had to remain confined to his fort. At last, Ibn Jamhur brought

peace between the hostile parties. Muzaffar died in 660 A.H. and was succeeded by his son Abu Hafs bin Muhammad known as Sajah with "Mutawakkil" as his title.

### **Yusuf bin Tashfain's Occupation of Badajoz**

Yusuf bin Tashfain captured Badajoz in 489 A.H. and did away with Mutawakkil and his progeny. He was punished very harshly for his entering into secret correspondences with the Christians to invade Spain and to put an end to the influence of Yusuf bin Tashfain on the country.

### **Ibn Jamhur's Rule in Cordova**

Jamhur bin Muhammad with Ibn Hazm as his filial name came to the throne of Cordova with the support of the people. He formed an executive committee under his leadership and ruled with common consent. He also disliked being called a king or Sultan. He was a pious and virtuous man and his rule was commendable. He would attend patients and join public assemblies. He died in 435 A. H. and was buried in his house.

### **Abul Waleed bin Jamhur bin Muhammad**

Jamhur bin Muhammad was succeeded by his son. Abul Waleed Muhammad bin Jamhur with the unanimous support of the people of Cordova. He also valued scholars and religious divines like his father. On his death, he was succeeded by his son Abdul Malik, who the people began to hate.

### **Abdul Malik bin Jamhur**

Banu Dhun'nun invaded Cordova. Abdul Malik sought help from Banu Abbad. Abbadid forces drove away Dhun'nun but they occupied Cordova and put Abdul Malik in prison. This was the end of the Jamhur dynasty in 461 A.H. Mu'tazid Abbadi appointed his son Sirajuddaula as the Governor of Cordova however, he was poisoned to death shortly after being appointed. Following this Mu'tazid seized Cordova and began to rule.

## **Ibn Habus's Rule In Granada**

At the time Banu Hamud set up their rule a Berber Chief Zadi bin Ziri Manad had founded his rule in Granada. When Spain was overtaken by civil war, chief Zadi deputed his son in Granada and he went to the king of Qairwan in Africa. In his absence, his brother Maks bin Ziri seized Granada and dislodged his nephew. Maks bin Ziri died in 429 A.H. His son Badis known as Ibn Habus succeeded him. Ibn Habus clashed several times with Dhun'nun and Ibn Abbad. He had a Jew named Ismail as his Prime Minister. Ibn Habus died in 467 A. H. He was succeeded by his grandson Abu Muhammad Abdullah bin Balkin bin Badis with "Muzaffar" as his title. He appointed his brother Tamim as Governor of Malaga as per the will of his grandfather. Yusuf bin Tashfain's of the Almoravids (from the Arabic Murabitun those serving at the frontier out posts) deposed and exiled both the brothers to Aghmat in Morocco.

[*Editors Note:* The name Almoravids is a corruption of the Arabic: Murabitun (from the Arabic root for rabat or outpost), which was made by orientalist historians and remains in this corrupted form in the history books of the west until today.]

## **Banu Dhun'nun's Rule In Toledo**

At a time when Spain was stormed by riots and violence, Ismail bin Zafir bin Abdur Rahman Sulaiman bin Dhun'nun seized Aqlanteen Fort. Yaeesh bin Muhammad bin Yaeesh, the Governor of Toledo declared his sovereignty. When he died in 427 A.H. the commanders of the forces of Toledo called Ismail from Aqlanteen Fort to seize Toledo. Thus, Ismail occupied Toledo without any resistance and began to rule successfully. Ismail bin Zafir died in 429 A.H. and was succeeded by his son Abul Hasan Yahya with "Mamun" as his title. Mamun became a very strong ruler in a state where there was nothing but anarchy in the atmosphere. He fought several battles with the Christian chiefs. Among the offspring of Mansur the Great was a man named Muzaffar, who had occupied Valencia province. Mamun dislodged him in 435 A.H. and annexed Valencia. Mamun then invaded Cordova and took it away from the Banu Abbad. Following this, his

son Abu Umar was killed by the people of Cordova. Mamun was also poisoned to death in 467 A.H. Then Toledo came under the control of his grandson Qadir bin Yahya bin Ismail. Alfonso, the Christian king of Castile invaded Toledo. Qadir bin Yahya vacated Toledo but sought Alfonso VI's help in the occupation of Valencia. Valencia was then under the control of Qadi Uthman bin Abu Badr bin Abdul Aziz. When the citizens of Valencia, came to know of Alfonso's possible attack on Valencia they deposed Uthman bin Abu Bakr and brought Qadir bin Yahya to power. Qadir passed away in 481 A.H.

### **Banu Hud's Rulers in Saragossa**

When Spain was overtaken by riots and violence at the end of the Umayyad Dynasty, Mundhir bin Mutrif titled Mansur proclaimed his independent rule in Saragossa. He entered into a pact with the Christian rulers. Mansur died in 414 A.H. and was succeeded by his son, Muzaffar. Toledo was then under the rule of Abu Ayub bin Muhammad bin Abdullah (the freed slave of Abu Hudayfa). Sulaiman bin Muhammad bin Hud who was a commander in the Northern territories, overpowered and killed Muzaffar and seized Saragossa and also took the title Musta'in. Muzaffar's son Yusuf then began to rule in Lerida and set out on a new series of battles.

Sulaiman ibn Hud, known as Musta'in died in 437 A.H. and was succeeded by his son Ahmad with Muqtadir Billah as his title. Muqtadir Billah sought help from the Christian rulers of Southern France and the Basque country and they came to his help. Yusuf fought valiantly and surrounded both Muqtadir and the Christians in Saragossa. This event took place in 443 A.H. Yusuf met with failure in this siege and the Christians returned to their respective lands. Muqtadir died in 474 A.H. after ruling in Saragossa for 37 years.

His son succeeded him in Saragossa with "Mu'tamin" as his title. He was well versed in mathematics. He wrote a number of books on this subject. He died in 478 A.H. the same year the Christians wrested Toledo from Dhun'nun. His son Ahmad with Musta'in II as his title succeeded Yusuf Mu'tamin. During his tenure, the Christians surrounded Huesca. Ahmad Musta'in marched from Saragossa in 489 A.H. and took on the Christians at Huesca but was defeated leaving ten thousand

Muslims dead. Ahmad Musta'in returned to Saragossa and continued to rule. Since the victory at Huesca had encouraged the Christians, they built a strong army and attacked Saragossa in 503 A.H. Ahmad Musta'in came out of Saragossa to take on the enemy and was killed in the battle.

Ahmad Musta'in was succeeded by Abdul Malik in Saragossa with Imaduddaula as his title. But the Christians seized Saragossa in 512 A.H. and dislodged Imaduddaula. He took refuge in the citadel of Rueda and died in 513 A.H.

His son Ahmad ascended the throne in the citadel with Saifuddaula as his title. He tried his level best to restore his ancestral country from the Christians but failed in his efforts. At last, he sold the Rueda citadel to the Christians and began to live in Toledo along with his relatives and died in 536 A.H.

### **Islands of Eastern Majorca, Minorca, and Sardinia**

Isam Khulani conquered Majorca in 290 A.H. and was appointed the Governor of the territory by the Sultan of Spain. Isam was succeeded by his son, Abdullah, as the Governor of Majorca. He ruled until 350 A.H., Caliph Nasir then appointed his servant Muwaffaq the Governor of the island. Muwaffaq waged *jihad* on France several times. He died in 359 A.H. His servant Kauser was appointed the Governor of the island. He passed away in 389 A.H. Mansur then sent his slave Muqatil to the island as the new Governor. He died in 403 A.H. Following him Mujahid bin Yusuf bin Ali Aamiri was appointed the Governor of Majorca. Abdullah became the Governor after him and he conquered and annexed Sardinia in 415 A.H. A man named Mubash'shir became the Governor in 468 A.H. until then the islands of Majorca, Minorca and Sardinia were governed by anarchy however, Mubash'shir brought them together to make a united country and waged *jihad* against France. At last, the Christian rulers of Barcelona and France surrounded Majorca on all sides. Mubash'shir sought help from Ali bin Yusuf bin Tashfain. Ali sent his warships without loss of time and drove away the Christians. Following this, the Almoravids began to rule the islands and then shifted to the Almohads and during their last days, the Christians seized these islands.

## Chapter 8

# **Christian Brutality in Spain**

### **Almoravid Rule**

The Almoravids take their name from the Arabic Al Murabit and in Arabic, they were called the Murabitun. The name is derived from the Arabic for those dwelling in frontier fortresses. We will have to go back to bring about the continuity of events. When the Muslim kingdoms were over taken by chaos and disorder, the Christian states of the northern frontiers began to see the opportunity for advancement and prosperity. They first tried hard to aggravate anarchy and internal fighting in the Muslim ranks. Alfonso VI built his force to fight the Muslims. He persuaded all the Christian States bordering Muslim Spain to attack and achieved success in his mission. He took Toledo from the control of Qadir Billah and annexed it. He asked the Christian clergy to convert the Muslims to Christianity through sermons but in the wake of a total failure in this mission, Alfonso VI began to perpetrate atrocities against the Muslims and could not stop himself from demolishing mosques and converting grand mosques into churches.



The Christian king of Aragon massacred Muslim forces pretending that they were going to invade Valencia. Rodmir, the Christian king wrested Saragossa from the Muslims and did not hesitate in the least from pulling down mosques. It is worth mentioning that the Muslim powers had so many times defeated the Christians and entered into their cities victoriously but never showed any brutality nor killed innocent Christian women and children.

After conquering Toledo Alfonso made an attempt to step into the territory of Barcelona. Mu'tamid bin Mu'tazid Abbadi, the king of Barcelona was then engaged in fighting with the king of Almeria so he sent tribute to Alfonso to avert trouble. Alfonso sent word to Mu'tamid that he wanted to keep his pregnant wife in the Cordova Mosque until she delivered and so he should make arrangements for the delivery and Zahra Palace should also be vacated for him. Cordova was then under the control of Mu'tamid but Mu'tamid rejected the petition point blank and killed his envoy as a punishment for his impertinence of requesting gold instead of silver, as already mentioned. Hearing this Alfonso VI marched ahead and made the demand, after encamping on the bank of Guadalquivir, that the city and its palaces be vacated for him. Mu'tamid replied on the back of his letter that he would not take much time in teaching him a lesson. This brief answer sent terror into the heart of Alfonso and he held back from attacking. However, he spread the rumor throughout that Mu'tamid had invited Yusuf bin Tashfain from Morocco to help him. He did this because the Muslim chiefs of Spain disliked the entry of the Moroccan king into their country and considered it a matter of utter disgrace, yet they felt no shame in paying tribute to the Christians. In the wake of such a rumor, the Muslim rulers wrote letters decrying such an injurious step taken by Mu'tamid. Mu'tamid wrote back the following to one and all:

"I prefer watching the camels to favoring the pigs"

What he meant was that if Alfonso captured him he would make him serve his pigs while Yusuf bin Tashfain would take him to Morocco and ask him to graze his camels if he occupied Spain. He would, therefore, never like to become the prisoner of Alfonso. Following this Mu'tamid sent an ambassador to Yusuf bin Tashfain to seek his help

against the Christians. Yusuf bin Tashfain rushed to Spain. Alfonso also started preparations to face such a formidable enemy and collected sixty thousand brave and seasoned warriors from various sources. Then looking at his huge army, Alfonso remarked with the utmost arrogance that even the angels from heaven could not defeat his force. Following this, he wrote a letter to Yusuf bin Tashfain who was with Mu'tamid in Seville. Referring to his large army and military strength he hurled a stream of abuses at him. Yusuf asked his secretary to write a reply. He drafted a lengthy well formatted letter in reply. Yusuf rejected it saying that such an ornamentation of style was not needed and wrote with his own pen on the back of Alfonso's letter;

"One who remains alive will see"

Alfonso grew terrified with the brief reply. Both forces faced each other on the battleground of Zallacca. The Muslim force was not more than twenty thousand in number. When the Muslim force moved ahead on Wednesday, Rajab, 479 A.H. Alfonso sent word that he requested to go to war on Saturday. Yusuf and Mu'tamid granted his petition. However, Alfonso had actually deceived the Muslim army and he launched a sudden attack while the Muslims were in a state of complete unawareness. However, they rose very cautiously and courageously to stop the invading Christian force and began to fight valiantly. Three horses fell dead under his thighs but he felt no terror and as Yusuf bin Tashfain made his charge the Christians sustained heavy losses of men. Alfonso VI received deep injuries and fled the battlefield of Zallacca on Rajab 20, 479 A.H. with only a few hundred soldiers. Muslim forces stayed on the battleground for four days. Mu'tamid asked Yusuf about the distribution of the spoils of war, he replied that he had come to help not to secure spoils of war. Both Yusuf and Mu'tamid went together to Seville. Yusuf took a rest for several days and then returned to Africa. Alfonso lost his senses after this smashing and disgraceful defeat however, the Muslim chiefs didn't take advantage of the terrible setback of the Christians and continued to engage in mutual conflict and feuds. In view of the plight of the Muslims the Christians began to muster courage once again and began to conquer Muslim cities including some of the citadels of Seville.

In response to the petitions of Spanish Muslim nobles, Yusuf bin Tashfain came to Spain once again. Muslim discord had risen to such a height that they even started quarrelling in the presence of Yusuf bin Tashfain. He grew so disappointed that he left for Morocco without doing anything.

Two years after that Yusuf bin Tashfain came to Spain again in 483 A.H. to punish the audacious Christians. The Spanish Muslim rulers had already acknowledged him as their patron. This time Yusuf bin Tashfain reached near to Toledo pushing back and defeating the Christian forces and besieged it. During the siege he asked the nobles of Spain to come to his help to make the siege a success. However, nobody paid any heed to his call, particularly, Abdullah bin Balkin, the king of Granada. Therefore, Yusuf bin Tashfain raised the siege and returned from Toledo, the capital of Alfonso VI. Then he decided to set the nobles of Spain in order, he arrested Abdullah, the ruler of Granada and his brother Tamim, the ruler of Malaga and sent them to Africa.

Following this, in Ramadan, 483 A.H., Yusuf bin Tashfain left his nephew and commander Sair bin Abi Bakr bin Tashfain with the force in Spain to punish the Christians and went back to Africa. He attacked Alfonso and wrested a few places from him. It was essential for the Muslim rulers of Spain to reinforce the Moroccan Commander but they refused flatly to do anything for him. Paying no attention to the unworthiness of the inept rulers of Spain, he kept marching against the Christians and took large amounts of territory including Portugal and forced some Christian rulers to obey him. When he consolidated his position in the conquered territories, he informed Yusuf bin Tashfain of his conquests along with fact that the Muslims of Spain extended him no help and they actually kept friendly relations with the Christians in a situation when the very integrity of Islam was at stake, he asked the Moroccan ruler to issue orders for his next step.

Yusuf bin Tashfain wrote him to keep waging *Jihad* on the Christians and make fresh attempts to seek the help of the rulers of Spain. If they take part in his mission, he should not oppose them. However, in case they lend support to the Christians against him, it is better that he should occupy their territories. He should make it a point to first occupy the Muslim states bordering the Christians so that those

territories could not join the Christians. This instruction was implemented in letter and spirit and Sair bin Abi Bakr first turned to Ibn Hud, the king of Saragossa. At the time, Saragossa was under the control of the Christians. The Muslim king of Saragossa was then staying in Rueda and ruling over the surrounding areas. Sair conquered Rueda rather easily. He then wrested Murcia from Abdur Rahman bin Tahir in Shawwal 484 A.H. and sent him to Africa. Shortly after that he annexed Almeria and Badajoz and conquered Carmona, Baiha, Bhalat, Malaga, and Cordova. Mu'tamid, the king of Seville then started preparations against the Almoravids. He was at the time the strongest of all kings in Spain and he also sought help from Alfonso. Alfonso sent a force to reinforce Mu'tamid. Having heard of the approaching Christian help Sair bin Abi Bakr besieged Seville on one hand and sent a commander to stop the Christian force on the other. The stated commander defeated and drove away the Christians. Sair bin Abi Bakr conquered Seville and arrested and sent Mu'tamid along with his family to Africa where he lived in detention and died in Rabia al-Awwal 488 A.H.

### **Yusuf bin Tashfain Occupies Spain**

The entire Islamic Spain came back under the control of Yusuf bin Tashfain, and the state of anarchy ended. Spain was ruled by Yusuf bin Tashfain, king of the Almoravid's Viceroys and Governors. The strife-torn country of Spain, which was about to go to the Christian fold, was saved by a Muslim king. All hopes entertained by the Christians of taking back Spain were dashed to the ground. Although the Christians were in control of the northern areas of the Peninsula, a large part of the populated and fertile area was under Muslim rule. Muqtadi Bi'amrillah, the Caliph of Baghdad sent him a garment and a standard and conferred on him the title of "Amir-ul-Muslimin" (Commander of the Muslims).

### **Yusuf bin Tashfain's Death**

From the time of his occupation of Spain Yusuf bin Tashfain remained alive for fifteen years and died in 500 A.H. It was a peaceful time in Spain. The citizens of the Arab race disliked the Almoravid rule because

they hated the Berbers ruling over them but this was their mistake. Had the Berber Muslims not been ruling over them the Christians surely would have.

### **Abul Hasan Ali bin Yusuf bin Tashfain**

Abul Hasan Ali bin Yusuf bin Tashfain succeeded his father at the age of 33 years. He surrounded Toledo in 503 A.H. The city could not be conquered owing to its strong fortifications and its situation. But Ali conquered Hijarah valley and its surrounding cities. The same year he wrested Lisbon and the remaining cities from the Christians. Ali bin Yusuf appointed his brother Tamim bin Yusuf as the viceroy of Spain. When Tamim heard of the military preparations of Alfonso I bin Ramirez, the king of Barcelona he attacked and stopped their advance and conquered and annexed Saragossa. The king of Barcelona sought help from the king of France and besieged Saragossa in 512 A.H. The Muslims could not withstand the invasion of the very large Christian force and in the face of the scarcity of food, they opened the gates of the city of Saragossa. The Christians conquered other cities and citadels also. The news of the fall of Saragossa came as a shock to Ali bin Yusuf. He lost no time and rushed to Spain in 513 A.H. and passed through Barcelona and Cordova on route to Saragossa and conquered all the areas won by the Christians and returned to Morocco in 515 A.H. after punishing the Christians and obtaining their submission. Alfonso VI who had made Toledo his capital died in 513 A.H. But Alfonso I of Aragon was still alive and was known as Ibn Ramirez. With the return of Ali bin Yusuf to Morocco Ibn Ramirez attacked the Islamic occupied areas with the support of the Christian citizens of Toledo and they were committed to the invasion of Granada. Ramirez advanced with a large army but Tamim bin Yusuf bin Tashfain gave them such a crushing defeat that he fled to Barcelona after losing half of his troops. A large number of Christians inhabited Grenada and its environs and they kept plotting against the Muslims. In the wake of such a situation Ali bin Yusuf came to Spain in 516 A.H. and sent a large number of Christians inhabiting Granada and its surroundings to Africa and scattered others in various places throughout Spain.

Abu Tahir Tamim bin Yusuf appointed his son Tashfain bin Tamim

bin Yusuf bin Tashfain as the viceroy of Spain. Ali bin Yusuf died in Rajab, 537 A.H. after ruling for thirty-six years and seven months.

### **Abu Muhammad Tashfain**

Ali son Abu Muhammad Tashfain succeeded him. Ali bin Yusuf had come to Spain for the last time in 516 A.H. He became involved in the controversy regarding Muhammad bin Abdullah known as Mahdi, the Promised in Morocco. The strife became aggravated to such an extent that even Ali's son Abu Muhammad Tashfain could not escape it after coming to the throne and could not pay attention to Spain.

### **Tashfain bin Ali**

When Tashfain bin Ali succeeded his father in Morocco in 537 A.H. He appointed Yahya bin Ali bin Gharbia as the viceroy of Spain. Yahya did his level best to save Spain and reduce the power of the Christians. The Almoravid rule on the other hand showed signs of weakness and decline and at last, Tashfain bin Ali died in 539 A.H. in a state of frustration after sustaining a defeat from Abdul Mumin, the leader of the Almohads and follower of Muhammad Abdullah.

### **Effect of the End of the Almoravid Rule On Spain**

In view of chaos and anarchy prevailing in the seat of power of the Almoravids the rulers of various Spanish territories declared their sovereignty as had happened following the end of the Umayyad dynasty. Muslim Spain was then so terribly fragmented that every city and town had its separate rule and every ruler had his own chosen title. But the worst was their unfriendly and hostile attitude of one towards another and the entire Muslim Spain was engulfed by strife and fighting. The Christians had an opportunity to seize the whole Peninsula. Yahya bin Ali, the Viceroy of Spain, had joined the anarchists by seizing Cordova. He was not the strongest of all. In such a turbulent atmosphere Abdul Momin, the ruler of the Almohads dislodged the Almoravids from Morocco and deputed his own commander in Spain and occupied it in 542 A.H. and after a short period of anarchy, Spain joined the Almohads rule.

During the Almoravid rule, Muslim jurists were very strong. Both the kings, Yusuf and Ali followed the Maliki doctrine and valued the jurists very highly. The highly learned and pious rulers had gone to the extent of being labeled as the enemy of philosophy and scholastic philosophy. Qadi Ayadh had made the royal court issue orders against the works of Imam Ghazali and any body possessing any piece of his work was subject to capital punishment.

Maktab-e-Ashraf

## Chapter 9

# **Almohads (Al-Mowahad) Rule in Spain**

### **Muhammad bin Abdullah Tumart**

Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Tumart, known as Ibn Tumart, was born in the village of Sus in Morocco. He belonged to the Berbers of Mauritania. He later claimed to have descended from Ali bin Abu Talib carrying his pedigree from Hasan bin Ali.

In 501 A.H. he left his territory in quest of knowledge and stayed in the eastern countries for about 14 years. He took lessons in Fiqh from Abu Bakr Shashu and learnt Hadith from Mubarak bin Abdul Jabbar and other scholars. He achieved the honor of drinking from Imam Ghazali's fountain of knowledge. He turned towards his motherland halting at Alexandria. Even in this short duration he campaigned against practices foreign to the Islamic *Shari'ah*, which led to his expulsion from the city. However, he feared none in spreading good and eradicating evil. He was, by all standards, a pious and righteous person. Ibn Khaldun reports his piety and purity in clear and strong words. He lived a life of utmost simplicity in food and clothes. He commanded grace and dignity and showed a cheerful disposition. But



his creed regarding the attributes of Allāh was a mixture of Ashairah, Sheiates and Philosophers. He could speak Arabic fluently and the Berber language was his mother tongue. In 515 A.H. he returned to his motherland and plunged heart and soul into preaching to his countrymen.

### **Declaring Himself as Imam Mahdi**

He claimed for himself the status of Imam Mahdi and formed various classes of his followers. He called the first as Muhajirin and the second *Muminin*. There were seven or eight classes in total. When the number of his followers increased he brought them under the command of Abdul Mumin and asked him to wage a war against the Almoravid Rule. In the first encounter Abdul Mumin's Army was defeated and later due to a power struggle among the Almoravids it gave them a hold over a considerable part of Morocco. Ibn Tumart had started military activities in 517 A.H. and died in 524 A.H. after 7 years of hectic military activity. He appointed Abdul Mumin as his successor with the title of "Amir al-Muminin". By this time Ibn Tumart's dynasty had become a formidable power and a rival of the Almoravids.

### **Abdul Mumin**

At the same time, Abdul Mumin, a man from the Berbers came to him and joined his circle of disciples. In his thoughts and feelings he was very much like Ibn Tumart. The ruler of the country showed dislike for Tumart's thoughts and activities and decided to do away with him. However, Ali bin Yusuf stood in the way and argued that he saw no reason for his elimination. Following the insistence of the Muslim jurists, he was expelled from Morocco. Ibn Tumart set up his headquarters in the High Atlas Mountains and shifted there with his followers. A large number of Berbers came and joined his camp.

His father's name was Ali who belonged to Kaurnia Clan among the Berbers of Mauritania. He was born in 487 A.H. Shortly after the demise of Ali bin Yusuf bin Tashqain in 537 A.H. the whole of Morocco came under the sway of Abdul Mumin. Since the main message of the teachings was belief in the perfect oneness of God his followers came to be called Mowahads [(from the Arabic root of the

word one: wahid) those who believe in perfect oneness, the name was corrupted to be Almohads by orientalist scholars and remains in this form in the western history books until today, we continue to use this corrupted name in this volume for the sake of easy reference for the reader.]

## **Abdul Mumin's Conquest of Spain**

After taking charge of Morocco Abdul Mumin sent General Abu Imran Musa bin Sayeed to Spain in 536 A.H. He first conquered Tarifa. He then marched to Saltes and Seville and then brought Cordova under his control. In 541 A.H., Abdul Mumin decided to come to Spain but the news of uprisings on his eastern borders stopped him. However, he sent his sons to Spain. Thus Abu Sayeed bin Abdul Mumin won Alzira and Cordova fell to Yahya bin Maimun, a general of Abdul Mumin, in 545 A.H. Abdul Mumin laid the foundation for the city of Rabat (camp or outpost) and named it Al-Fath (Victory), this is the present day capital of Morocco. It was there that he quartered troops for the jihad on Spain. Abdul Mumin crossed the Strait of Gibraltar and made inroads into Spain. It was from there that the chiefs and rulers of a number of territories thronged to extend their loyalty to him. Thus the flag of Islam fluttered over Spain.

In 555 A.H. Abdul Mumin appointed his son, Abu Sayeed, the Governor of Granada and viceroy of Muslim Spain. However, Abu Sayeed had to go to Morocco in response to a call from his father. During his absence, a man, Ibrahim by name, captured Granada and declared his independent rule. Abu Sayeed proceeded to Spain along with his brother Abu Hafs. Ibrahim came out with his troops and gave a fierce battle, which resulted in the defeat of Abu Sayeed and the death of Abu Hafs. Abu Sayeed took refuge in Malaga. He kept his hope intact and built a large army to avenge his defeat. Abdul Mumin dispatched his third son Abu Yaqub and General Abu Yusuf bin Sulaiman to assist Abu Sayeed. The Almohads became victorious after extensive bloodshed. Ibrahim conceded defeat and sought forgiveness, which was granted. After winning peace all around Abdul Mumin began to build a huge army to advance further into European territories. At last he was able to raise 5 hundred thousand fighters

from Africa, Spain and Morocco. He was about to move forward with his massive army when he passed away in Jumad al-Thani 558 A.H.

### **Abu Yaqub**

His son, Abu Yaqub Yusuf came to the throne as his successor, he failed to fulfill his father's dream because of some internal problems and impediments. The Christians, on the other hand, captured some of the western districts of Spain. Abu Yaqub moved forward at the head of ten thousand men and retook the territories captured by the Christians. He then laid siege around Toledo but raised it to go back to Morocco. In 580 A.H. the Christians of Santaren city rose once again against the Muslim rule. Abu Yaqub Yusuf rushed to Spain and besieged Santaren. During the siege that took over a month he fell ill and died in Rajab, 580 A.H.

### **A Review of Abu Yaqub's Reign**

Abu Yaqub was good-natured, enlightened and a great lover of learning. Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Tufayl, a leader in Philosophy was his courtier and adviser, another scholar, Abu Bakr bin Sane, known as Ibn Maja was among his main advisers. At the insistence of Ibn Tufayl, Abu Yaqub called Abul Waleed Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Rushd from Cordova and enlisted him among his honorable courtiers. He is the same Ibn Rushd who was a renowned philosopher and critic of Aristotle's philosophical thoughts. He very ably highlighted the inherent weak points in the philosophy of the Greek scholar. During the reign of Abu Yaqub all the countries from Morocco to Tripoli and the entire Spain including the Island of Sicily and other Mediterranean Islands came to the fold of Islam.

### **Abu Yusuf Mansur**

After Abu Yaqub, his son, Abu Yusuf took the throne at the age of 32. He was born of a Christian mother named Sahira. During his reign in Spain, Muslim power and welfare remained the dominant factor. In his qualities of mind and spirit Mansur was similar to his father. He held the religious scholars in high esteem and was fond of books. He passed his life mostly in Spain. In 585 A.H. he eliminated Christian

influence from the western parts of Spain. Alfonso, the King of Castile, was eager to sign a peace treaty for five years with him. Mansur granted his entreaty. Being safe from Muslim invasion he embarked on his plan of building a strong army from all the Christian lands including Spain.

Since Mansur had a very strong navy, Salahuddin Ayubi sent his envoy and poet Abdur Rahman bin Munqad to Mansur with a letter requesting him to reinforce the Muslims with his warships against the Christian forces and help him guard the coastal areas of Palestine. Since Sultan Salahuddin Ayubi recognized the Caliph of Baghdad as the Caliph of the entire Muslim *Ummah*, he did not address Mansur with a title. This attitude of Salahuddin Ayubi enraged Mansur. Although, he greeted the poet and emissary, he paid no heed to the request of Salahuddin and simply kept delaying the matter.

Alfonso II of Castile, enjoying peace with the five-years no war-pact, plunged himself heart and soul in making massive military preparations against the Muslims. He gave the ensuing war the air of a Crusade and thus attracted active help and support from the entire Christian community. At last, he arrived at Alarcos in Badajoz along with several Christian rulers and their forces in Rajab, 591 A.H. The two forces clashed on the battlefield of Alarcos. Although the Muslim fighters were much less in number, the Christians suffered a crushing defeat and fled the field leaving behind one hundred and forty-six thousand killed and thirty thousand captives. It was a great victory indeed. The volume of preparations made against the Muslims can be gauged from the fact that the fleeing Christian fighters left on the battlefield one hundred and fifty thousand tents, eighty thousand horses, one hundred thousand mules, four hundred thousand donkeys and sixty thousand coats of mail of different designs. Mansur very generously distributed among his soldiers all the spoils of war.

Alfonso fled for his life and took refuge in the Alarcos Fort with the rest of his troops. But Mansur moved forward at his back and laid siege around the fort. Alfonso escaped and went to Toledo. He was so overwhelmed with grief and anger that he had his head and beard shaved and vowed while holding the Cross that he would not enjoy

comfort and luxury unless he avenged the killing of the thousands of Christians by the Muslims. When Mansur came to know of this, he rushed to Toledo immediately, besieged the city and began to destroy the fort, its walls and ramparts with his war machine. In this grim situation Alfonso II, acted very disgracefully by sending his mother, wife and daughters to the court of Mansur. They came bareheaded, and Alfonso's mother begged forgiveness for her son. She cried and bewailed so pitifully and Mansur was moved so deeply by the scene that he not only forgave his sworn enemy but also treated the ladies honorably and sent them back laden with costly gifts. He then raised the siege of Toledo and went back to Cordova. The thirty or forty thousand Christian prisoners languishing in confinement were sent to Morocco to settle there.

Mansur was good-natured, pious and a staunch follower of the *Sunnah*, the practices of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Following his order, the persons leading the Muslims in prayer would recite *Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim* aloud preceding *Al-Hamd* in prayers. He died in Safar, 595 A. H. after reigning for fifteen years. King Richard of England died the same year.

### **Abu Abdullah Muhammad**

His son, Abu Abdullah Muhammad came to the throne in Safar 595 A.H. at the age of 17 with Nasir Li-Din-Allah as his appellation. With the beginning of his reign, the eastern parts of Morocco faced insurgence and disorder and some of the chiefs of the Almoravids started capturing territory. Nasir had to stay in Morocco to put down the uprisings. The Christians, after being defeated by Salahuddin Ayubi in Syria and pates time fled back to Europe burning with anger. They worked out a plan to invade Spain and Morocco to avenge their crushing defeat in Syria and Palestine. They gave a call to the Christian world to join the crusade against the Muslims. The Archbishop of Rome proclaimed a crusade against the Almohads. At the same time the nobles rose against John, the King of England and the Archbishop proclaimed the King excommunicated from Christianity. John sent a three-member deputation to Nasir in Morocco. They met Nasir and gave his letter to the Muslim ruler, which sought his military help to

put down the insurgencies in his country. He had also written about his readiness to embrace Islam by renouncing Christianity. Bishop Robert was the leader of the delegation. He also spoke strongly in support of the letter. Nasir grew doubtful of the letter and their intent and greeted them rather coldly. He thought that they wanted to change their religion for worldly gains. He was sure that the King of England would proclaim his acceptance of Islam despite his cold attitude if Islam had actually entered his heart.

Nasir was a man of polite nature and hated unnecessary bloodshed. His army, which was very strong, active and spirited during the reign of his father, had now lost much of its vitality and fighting spirit. Besides, his predecessor would give each of the soldiers a quarterly reward in addition to their monthly salaries but Nasir abandoned the practice, which led to the frustration of the troops and their Generals. King Alfonso set up a military camp in Toledo where Christians from Europe and other countries rushed to join. Spain was nearer to Europe in comparison to Syria and Palestine and they could mobilize their military might much easier.

When Nasir heard of the military preparations of the Christians, he mobilized his troops from Morocco and Spain and declared *Jihad* against the Christians. About six hundred thousand Muslim fighters gathered at Seville while Alfonso's forces encamped at Al-Uqab near Salem. Nasir's troops also reached Al-Uqab. The Christians were growing mad with rage and their defeat in Syria had ignited the fire of revenge against the Muslims. The state of the Muslim Army was the opposite. Almost the entire fighting machine was in a state of revolt and they presented a scene of disorder. The soldiers had received no salary for some months not to speak of gifts and rewards. The commanding officers intended defeat as the only course left to win the attention of their ruler to gain their rights and welfare.

When the battle line was drawn between the rival forces, some of the Generals left the battlefield with the troops under their commands. In the midst of fighting a large number of Muslim fighters buried their spears in the ground instead of piercing them into enemies' bodies, while others threw their swords towards the enemy's rows. Others refused to obey the orders of Nasir. Thus those sincere and spirited

fighters lost their courage when they watched others indulge in activities injurious to the Muslim cause and the very safety of Islam. The miserliness of Nasir coupled with disgraceful deceit and disloyalty of the Muslim soldiers inflicted an untold loss to Islam and its followers. Never in the whole history of Islam had Muslim forces taken the field in such a large number and had the bulk of the Muslim troops not been treacherous the Christian Army would have tasted the most smashing and ignominious defeat. They would have been crushed more relentlessly than what they experienced in Syria and Palestine. How pitiful it is that six hundred thousand men conceded such a shameful defeat and only one thousand of the whole army remained alive to mourn the disaster. Nasir fought gallantly but his sword could not change the defeat into victory. Almost all the soldiers of the defeated Muslim army were either killed in the battlefield or slaughtered in captivity.

Nasir came back to Seville, defeated and frustrated. The Christians went wild and started plundering cities and killing Muslim men, women and children in as many numbers as they could. When Alfonso noticed the Christians' large-scale indulgence in loot, arson and massacre he tried to bring the situation under his control. But it resulted in their opposition to the King. Moreover, the Christians from other countries began to leave for their respective countries. Alfonso saw this development with a sense of satisfaction. The damages caused by the Christians brought the decline of the Muslim rule in Spain. Many towns, villages and settlements had a deserted look and none of them could escape from death. In Shaban, 610 A.H. Nasir came to Morocco from Seville and died shortly after that.

### **Yusuf Mustansir**

Nasir was succeeded by his son Yusuf on Shaban 11, 610 A.H. and adopted the title of Mustansir. He was only 16 when he ascended the throne. He died after ruling the country for a decade. He was lacking in courage and spirit and lived a very luxurious life. Most of Spain was captured by the Christians during his rule. During his entire tenure of ten years not even once did he leave Morocco and he never went to Spain after becoming king.

## **Abdul Wahid**

His brother, Abdul Wahid came to the throne after Mustansir. After a short tenure of nine months he was dethroned and assassinated by his nobles and courtiers.

## **Abdul Wajid Adil**

At that time another son of Nasir and the brother of Abdul Wahid was the Governor of Murcia, a province of Spain. He staked his claim to the throne when he heard the news of Abdul Wahid's assassination and he came to the throne in Murcia with the title of Adil.

The same year 621 A.H. the Christians attacked him and he was defeated in the battle. Following this he appointed his brother Idris as his deputy in Seville and went to Morocco. The people of Morocco had enthroned a young boy of 16, Yahya bin Nasir and gave battle to Adil. Adil was arrested, knowing of this Idris came to the throne with the title of Mamun. It was at the time when the Almohads had lost their power and influence all over Spain and Morocco. Banu Marin were taking over the lead in Morocco while the nobles of Spain refused to accept men from Morocco and Berbers to rule their destiny. They also feared that weak Moroccan rulers would surrender their country to the Christians leaving them to pass the rest of their lives as slaves. Thus a person from Bani Hud named Muhammad bin Yusuf, rose to the occasion and laid the foundation of his rule.

## **End of the Almohads' Rule**

Thus was erased the name of Almohads from the face of Spain by 625 A.H. Mamun set up his center in Ceuta fort and died there. His son, Rasheed succeed him. Bani Marin were gradually and steadily developing their might with the result they captured Morocco completely ending the Almohad Rule.



## Chapter 10

# **Anarchy again in Muslim Spain**

As has already been mentioned, many sovereign states emerged out of the ruins of Banu Umayyad and the Christian Kings took advantage of their constant rivalries. They expanded their territories by taking Muslim lands. Later the Almoravids came to power in Muslim Spain and small Kingdoms united under one Muslim rule. Almohads established their rule on the debris of the Almoravid dynasty. The Christians' gains from the prevailing anarchy were not insignificant and whatever the Almohads had established as a result of the united Muslim front was lost on the battlefield of Al-Uqab. It was an opportunity for the Christians to wipe out all traces of the Muslims from the face of Spain but the corrupt practices of the Christian fighters invited hatred and opposition to the Christians in Spain. When the Almohad Rule came to its end, more than half of the northern part of Spain and all the western provinces had already come under Christian control. Muslim Spain was overtaken by anarchy once again. Muslim rule was again broken into small fragments each at war with another. Every Muslim chief invited the Christian troops against another and offered them some cities and forts in return for their military help. This depravity of the Muslim rulers was very pleasing and encouraging for the Christians.

## **Banu Hud State**

### **Muhammad bin Yusuf**

In 503 A.H., Ahmad Mustafin bin Abu Amir Yusuf Mutamin bin Abu J'afar bin Hud was martyred fighting against the Christians. During the last days of the Almohad dynasty he passed a life of luxury and comfort. When he noticed cracks in the structure of the central rule, he joined a band of robbers and within a short period became its chief. He first set himself to the task of increasing his strength and then attacked Abul Abbas, the Governor of Murcia and captured the province. He conquered Granada, Malaga, and Almeria and then captured Cordova by expelling King Mamun from Spain. By 625 A.H. the entire Muslim Spain came under his control. The same year the Christian King of Barcelona expelled the Almohad Governors following his conquest of Majorca and Minorca islands. Following in the footsteps of Muhammad bin Yusuf several other ambitious leaders raised their heads and set up their own independent states. When Muhammad bin Yusuf felt that it was next to impossible to subdue the chiefs and bring their subjects around to his policies, he wrote a letter to the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad saying: "I have conquered the whole of Spain in your name and established my government here. I request you with the utmost regard that I be appointed as the ruler of this country and a royal certificate authorizing me for the throne of Spain be issued. The Caliph of Baghdad thought it to be an event from the unseen and conferred upon him the certificate along with royal garments. As a follow-up action, Muhammad bin Yusuf ordered the people to assemble in the Grand Mosque of Granada and appeared in the royal attire with a black standard in his hand. He then read out the edict from Caliph Mustansir Abbasi and greeted the Muslims as a whole. This device left a positive impact on the nobles and the people in general gave him support. It was however just a passing event. The nobles could not continue with Muhammad bin Yusuf for long. Their old antagonistic activities came to the surface once again. The result was internal disturbances and civil war. The Christians found an opportunity to capture Muslim cities one after another. In 627 A.H., they captured Merida city, the biggest city after Cordova. On being

informed Muhammad bin Yusuf came with his army and attacked Alfonso, the Ninth. After a fierce encounter he was defeated. He came back frustrated and chose Murcia as his ruling center. In 629 A.H., Ibn al-Ahmar staked his claim on Spain and captured a number of cities. About the same time a chief, named Abu Marwan captured Seville. Ibn al-Ahmar developed a friendship with Abu Marwan and increased his military power. In 632 A.H., Ibn al-Ahmar stepped into Seville as a friend but captured the territory by assassinating Abu Marwan. The people of Seville expelled Ibn al-Ahmar from Seville and showed their obedience to Muhammad bin Yusuf. The Muslim ruler appointed Ibn Al-Ramimi as his Minister and entrusted most of the official work to him. He was later appointed as the Governor of Almeria where he rose against the central rule. Muhammad bin Yusuf proceeded to punish the rebel when Ibn Ramimi's spies strangled him to death while he was sleeping in his camp. Following this Ibn Ramimi declared himself the sovereign King of Almeria. However, Murcia remained under the children of Muhammad bin Yusuf who showed their obedience to Ibn al-Ahmar. Finally, the dynasty saw its end in 658 A.H.

In addition to Banu Hud, Ibn al-Ahmar, Ibn Marwan, Ibn Khalid, and Ibn Mardiansh established their separate rules and Ferdinand played a fundamental role in setting one State against another. The King of Barcelona began to invade the Muslim States one after another. The Christians would extend military help to one against another and then fought against the one, which was once given help. Their sole purpose was to expand the Christian territories. In Shawal, 636 A.H., the King of Castile conquered Cordova, the capital of the central rule and established their government by ravaging the grandeur of this magnificent city. It was indeed the end of Islamic splendor. In this era fraught with sufferings and disturbances one wise step taken by Ibn al-Ahmar was to make peace with Ferdinand and to strengthen his own power under the shadow of peace won in lieu of some cities and forts. This spell of peace he utilized to win victories over Granada, Malaga, Lorca, and Jaen. Thus he established a strong rule over one-fourth of Spain, a rule which spanned over 250 years. The capital of Muslim Spain had changed to Granada from Cordova.

## Chapter 11

# **Granada**

### **Ibn Al-Ahmar**

Nasr bin Yusuf, known as Ibn Al-Ahmar, had captured Granada and Malaga in 632 A.H. after befriending Ibn Khalid, the ruler of Seville. In 643 A.H., the ruler of Almeria extended his obedience to him and the people of Lorca accepted him in 663 A.H. as their King. Until that time he had the support of Ferdinand. However, when the Muslim States began to fall one after another, the Christians thought of usurping the State of Ibn Al-Ahmar but Ibn al-Ahmar was wise enough to have already established friendly relations with King Yaqub Abdul Haq of Bani Marin. King Yaqub had become the ruler of North Africa and Morocco after the end of the Almohad's dynasty. Thus, whenever, he was threatened by the Christian powers, he received help from Yaqub Marini without delay. By this device, Ibn al-Ahmar defeated the Christians repeatedly and saved his small State. Ibn al-Ahmar laid the foundation of Al-Hamra Palace in Granada, which is still considered as one of the Seven Wonders of the World and a relic of the declining years of Muslim grandeur. However, it bears no

comparison with the Zahra Palace of Cordova, which was pulled down by the savage Christians. Ibn al-Ahmar was on his way back to Granada after giving a disastrous defeat to the Christians when his horse stumbled near his fort and he fell down. Even though he had not sustained any deep injury, he succumbed to it on 29 Jumad al-Thani 671 A.H.

### **Abu Abdullah Muhammad**

His son, Abu Abdullah Muhammad, succeeded him. He was 38 when he came to the throne. In accordance with the will of his father, he kept friendly relations with Bani Marin and devoted himself wholeheartedly to campaigning against his enemies. In 673, the Christian forces invaded Granada, Muhammad asked Yaqub bin Abdul Haq Marini for help. He immediately sent his son to Spain at the head of a strong army and he followed him with another force, Algeciras was taken from a rebel Chief and turned it into his military cantonment. Muhammad, on his part, offered Zarifah Fort to Yaqub to set up his own cantonment. Sultan Muhammad and Sultan Yaqub launched a joint attack on the Christians and gave them a crushing defeat on Rabia al-Awwal 15, 673 A.H. Following this defeat the Christians built a strong army and launched another attack on the Muslims but were defeated again. In Muharram, 695 A.H. the King of Castile began to concentrate his army on the borders of Granada. Being informed Sultan Muhammad stormed into Qajata and its surroundings and conquered the military base of the Christians. In 699 A.H., Sultan Muhammad wrested some frontier forts from the Christians. Sultan Muhammad died on Shaban 8, 701 A.H. after an eventful reign of about 30 years. He is also known as Sultan Muhammad Faqih for he was very fond of books.

### **Muhammad Makhlu'a**

Muhammad was succeeded by his son Muhammad Makhlu'a. He handed over all powers to his Minister, Muhammad bin Muhammad Hakam Lakhmi. In 703 A.H., Abu al-Haj bin Nasr, the ruler of Gaudix rose against Muhammad Makhlu'a, which was suppressed with a heavy hand and the rebel was put to death. The majority of people

were angry with the Minister and they persuaded Muhammad Makhlu'a's brother Nasr bin Muhammad to rise in revolt against the government, plunder the house of the Minister and arrest and depose Muhammad Makhlu'a after which Nasr bin Muhammad was enthroned.

### **Sultan Nasr bin Muhammad**

Nasr bin Muhammad came to the throne and appointed Nasr, the son of the assassinated Abul al-Hajj, to his administration. The event of enthronement had taken place on the Eid Day in 708 A.H. The next year the King of Castile invaded Algeciras. Although this city remained unconquered Jabl-i-Tariq (Gibraltar) was captured by the Christian King. The same year the King of Barcelona attacked Almeria and King Nasr dispatched his army to save Almeria. The battle was still on when Abu Sayeed, the nephew of Ibn al-Ahmar and the ruler of Malaga rose against him. Abul Waleed, the son of Abu Sayeed conquered both Almeria and Malaga. Thus started a civil war in Granada and the rule over Granada was divided into two. The situation was still out of control when Nasr fell ill and his condition turned almost hopeless. They attempted to enthrone Muhammad Makhlu'a in place of Nasr but King Nasr recovered and killed Muhammad Makhlu'a in prison. Following this Abu Sayeed and his son, Abul Waleed started ruling the occupied territories by making Malaga their capital. In Muharram 713 A.H., Abul Waleed proceeded with his troops and camped near Granada. Nasr came out from Granada with his own army but was defeated by Abul Waleed on Muharram 13, 713 A.H. and he took refuge in Granada. He then started a peace process but the peace treaty was still to be finalized when the citizens of Granada held him back from signing any treaty and persuaded him to take over Granada completely. When he found some chiefs of Granada sympathetic to him, he became ready to attack. The two forces clashed at Sardonia and Abul Waleed achieved victory. Nasr took refuge in Al-Hamra Palace. At last he abdicated the throne in favor of Abul Waleed.

### **Abul Waleed**

After coming to the throne of Granada he gave Nasr permission to settle in Ash valley. Abul Waleed took over the administration of

Granada and began to run it skillfully. The Christians who were until then happy over the civil war among the Muslim states grew worried at the firm rule of Abul Waleed. They now engaged themselves in preparing to go against Granada. The King of Castile attacked and captured some border areas of Granada. Abul Waleed faced the challenge with firmness and determination and drove away the Christians from his land. In view of Abul Waleed's supreme military operations the Christians declared it a holy war and roused the entire Christian world against the Muslim rule. Bishops and clergies ignited in their people the fire of anger and revenge against the Muslims as a whole. The Archbishop personally took part in the Christian campaigns. Christian forces were concentrated in Toledo and their number rose to two hundred thousand. They seemed determined to wipe out all Muslim signs and traces from the face of Spain. Crown prince Batardah of the Castile dynasty was given the command of a huge Christian force. About twenty-five Christian rulers from Europe joined the holy war. The Archbishop spread his hand over the head of every general and the bishops all over Europe supplicated for the annihilation of the Muslims.

### **The Battle of Albirah**

The Muslims of Granada grew anxious to hear of the massive military preparations by the Christian world. Abul Waleed sent a call for help to Abu Sayeed but his call received no response with the result that the Muslims of Granada felt even more anxious. They were expecting their extinction. Abul Waleed could muster only five thousand and five hundred troops from all over Granada, which was virtually insignificant in comparison to the huge Christian army of several hundred thousand. However, Abul Waleed marched out of Granada at the head of a handful of men relying wholly and solely on the help and support of Allah Almighty. He sent General al-Ghazat as the vanguard with five hundred troops under his command and he himself marched at the head of five thousand troops. They covered the entire route discussing ways and means of winning victory over such a large Christian army. However, the vanguards of both sides clashed at first and the result was a reverse for the Christians. Abul

Waleed then hid one thousand cavaliers behind the brush adjacent to Albirah. He then sent General al-Ghazat ahead with a column of five hundred soldiers with instructions that they should retreat after coming face to face with the Christians troops so that the chasing Christians would be suddenly attacked by the hidden Muslim troops. Abul Waleed himself was waiting at a suitable place with only three hundred horsemen under his command. The rest of the troops were given to another General to lead slowly towards the enemy. Following the plan general al-Ghazat moved near the Christian troops early in the morning of Jumad al-Awwal 6, 719 A.H. The Christians found the Muslim side very poor in number and made no delay in attacking them. General al-Ghazat began to move back while the sea of Christian forces pursued the retreating troops with a desire to crush the Muslims. When the Christian troops moved in front of the bush, the one thousand strong Muslim column sprang from behind the thick bush and fell on the Christian troops. In the meantime, General al-Ghazat fought back the embarrassed Christians while Abul Waleed launched his attack from the third side. The rest of the troops also caught the enemy unaware. Although the Muslim troops were no match for the Christian army their tactics and the supreme sacrifice of lives paid them rich dividends. The four-pronged fierce attack of the gallant Muslim troops tore off their battle-lines and made them flee from the scene of their death and destruction leaving behind one hundred thousand dead. It is quite amazing that the number of Muslim martyrs did not exceed 13. This event is, indeed, one of the marvels of the history of war. The Commander-in-Chief of the Christian army along with his twenty-five guards was also found among the dead. His wife and son were among the seven thousand captives of war. It was a backbreaking defeat for the Christians. It now dawned upon them that the annihilation of the Muslims from Granada was not an easy task. Abul Waleed thanked Allah Almighty for the unexpected victory and then conceded to the peace offer made by his enemies. When he returned to Granada victoriously, his nephew treacherously assassinated him. The assassin was also killed in *qisas* (punishment by retaliation) and the throne was given to Muhammad, the son of Abul Waleed.



## **King Muhammad**

Sultan Muhammad appointed Abul Ala Uthman as his minister. But when Uthman consolidated his power beyond all limits and his activities proved injurious to the throne, Muhammad had assassinated him in 729 A.H. In 733 A.H., Sultan Muhammad cleared Gibraltar of the Christian military. The Christians launched an attack with Army and Navy but failed to save Gibraltar. On his way back to Granada, the sons and relatives of Abul Ala Uthman assassinated him.

## **Sultan Yusuf**

Sultan Muhammad was succeeded by his brother Yusuf who was then 16 but he was very wise, brave and God-fearing. He held together vital components of his government with caution and prudence and avenged the blood of his brother. Meanwhile, the Christian powers began to raid Gibraltar and its surrounding areas. Sultan Yusuf drew the attention of Abul Hasan Marini, the King of Morocco towards this. Abul Hasan sent his son towards Gibraltar with a detachment. Sultan Yusuf reached there from another side. The Christian troops tasted defeat in the encounter. When the Moroccan army was on its return journey, the Christians sniped at it and inflicted heavy casualties. In 740 A.H. Sultan Abul Hasan marched to Spain at the head of sixty thousand fighters while Sultan Yusuf came from another side to lend his support to Abul Hasan. A huge and well-equipped Christian army gave a heavy blow to the Muslim forces and captured a part of Granada. After this Sultan Abul Hasan went back to Morocco and Sultan Yusuf took refuge in Granada.

In 749 A.H., Sultan Yusuf appointed Lisanuddin Ibn al-Khatib as his Prime Minister and set himself to preparing for avenging his defeat. In 755 A.H., when Sultan Yusuf was quite ready to take on the Christians a stranger killed him with his spear while he was performing the Eid prayer and was in prostration.

## **Sultan Muhammad Ghani Billah**

His son, Muhammad with the appellation of Ghani Billah, succeeded Yusuf. Sometime after coming to the throne he sent Lisanuddin Ibn al-

Khatib to Abu Salim bin Abul Hasan Marini, the King of Morocco to seek his help against the Christians. Abu Salim dispatched a detachment. No large-scale encounter took place and no purpose was served. Ridwan, the caretaker of Sultan Muhammad's government made inroads into his thoughts and feelings and was at the helm of all administrative affairs. Because of this, Ismail, the stepbrother of Sultan Muhammad captured the Granada Fort when Muhammad was away from the city at Generalife, the name of the garden resort for the Sultans of Granada (corrupted from the Arabic Jannat al-Arif and is considered part of the Al Hamra palace). When King Muhammad heard about this, he went straight to Gaudix and began to build his Army. He also sent a letter to the King of Castile requesting him for his help. He had not yet received any satisfactory reply from the Christian King when Abu Salim bin Abul Hasan Marini, the King of Morocco, sent Abu al-Qasim bin Sharif as his envoy to Sultan Muhammad and requested him to come to Morocco. He went to Morocco and was greeted with honor.

### **Sultan Ismail**

Sultan Ismail also entered into correspondence with the King of Castile asking for his hand of friendship. Since the Christians were at war with the King of Barcelona at that time, they considered this offer of peace and friendship as a sign from providence. However, on 4 Shaban 761 A.H. Abu Yahya, the brother of Sultan Ismail killed Ismail and his coterie and captured the throne. On 27 Shawwal, Sultan Muhammad returned to Spain with the help of the King of Morocco and captured parts of Granada. Abu Yahya Abdullah, finding himself too weak to face the onslaught of Sultan Muhammad, rushed to the King of Castile for help. The Christian King had him and his Comrades killed at Seville on 2 Rajab 763 A.H. and captured all their possessions.

Sultan Muhammad Makhlu'a, on the other hand, captured Granada and came on the throne. For several years the Government of Granada had become a tributary of the Christian rule of Castile. Sultan Muhammad captured Granada and made all efforts to consolidate his position. Luckily, civil war started among the progeny of Abu Salim of

Morocco after his demise. The King of Castile was locked in battle with his own brother. Sultan Muhammad took advantage of these civil wars. He captured Gibraltar and refused to give tribute to Castile and the Christian powers could do nothing except keep silent. During Sultan Muhammad's rule, Granada flourished in every field and he became a terror for the Christian forces.

### **Sultan Yusuf II**

Sultan Muhammad died in 793 A.H. and was succeeded by his son, Yusuf II. He was peace loving and wise and he finalized a peace treaty with the King of Castile. Among his four sons Yusuf, Muhammad, Ali and Ahmad, Muhammad was the cleverest one of them.

### **Sultan Muhammad VII**

Yusuf II died in 798 A.H. Muhammad came on the throne by passing his elder brother Yusuf. Since a number of men in the family were given "Muhammad" as their name, Muhammad bin Yusuf the second is known as Muhammad, the seventh. A few days after the enthronement of Muhammad VII, clashes with the Christians took a fresh start. It resulted in the defeat of the Christians and the Muslims captured a number of Christian territories. During this time the King of Castile passed away leaving behind his suckling son John. After the baby was put on the throne, his Uncle Ferdinand took charge of the operation of affairs and acted as regent. The Christian troops were much greater in number so Muhammad the Seventh kept the Christian troops engaged on the battle front and invaded Jaen city with the rest of his army. This caused the Christians to send a considerable number of their men to save the city and the pressure on both fronts was so heavy that Ferdinand was forced to sign a peace treaty with Muhammad VII. By this technique the fighting between the two ended. However, in 803 A.H. a fresh encounter between the rival forces broke out and no side was able to subdue the other. The Christians once again requested peace and a peace treaty was signed, which served its purpose for only eight months. The terms of the treaty were still to be completed when Sultan Muhammad fell ill and died. His interned brother Yusuf, the third, succeeded him.

### **Sultan Yusuf III**

Immediately after coming to the throne Yusuf III sent general Abdullah to Ferdinand to extend the term of the peace treaty for two years. When this two-year peace term was about to end, Sultan Yusuf III sent his brother Ali to the King of Castile as his envoy requesting him for a further extension. The Christian King thought his seeking peace was due to Yusuf's weakness and he told Ali that the request for an extension could be granted only with the payment of tributary. Ali rejected the conditional peace terms and left for Granada. Close on the heels of this rejection Ferdinand invaded Granada with a huge army and after a heavy encounter, the Christians took a part of Granada. The battle was going on when a detachment from Morocco launched an attack on Gibraltar under the command of Prince Abu Sayeed. Hearing of the onslaught Yusuf III sent his brother Ahmad at the head of an army to save Gibraltar. But the two princes entered into peace instead of fighting. Abu Sayeed then came to Granada as a guest of Ahmad. In the meantime the King of Morocco and elder brother of Abu Sayeed wrote Yusuf III to kill Abu Sayeed while he was in Granada. Yusuf III gave the letter to Abu Sayeed and told him that his brother had asked him to invade Gibraltar simply as a plot to kill him. Abu Sayeed was shocked at the nefarious plan of his brother. He then set himself to making preparations in Spain and then attacked Morocco with the help of Sultan Yusuf III. He dispossessed his brother and came to the throne. He thanked his benefactor, Sultan Yusuf III for his help and support.

The same year 820 A.H., King John of Castile took over the reign and deposed his uncle Ferdinand. He made peace with Yusuf III on the advice of his mother. Yusuf III was a lover of justice and most of the Christians would make him their mediator in personal disputes and would agree to his decision. Yusuf III passed away in 822 A.H.

Soon after coming to the throne Sultan Muhammad VIII, the son of Sultan Yusuf III renewed the peace and friendship treaty with Castile and Morocco and appointed Amir Yusuf as his Minister. Unfortunately, after sometime Muhammad VIII joined the company of the people having low and base conduct. Finally, Muhammad IX captured

Granada and Muhammad VIII fled for his life and went to the King of Tunis in the guise of a poor boatman. He greeted him with honor and promised him help.

### **Sultan Muhammad IX**

After coming to the throne Sultan Muhammad IX made the nobles his supporters. But he committed the mistake of antagonizing the minister, Yusuf who began indulging in activities injurious to the administration. Yusuf, the minister, left Granada with one thousand five hundred men and came to Murcia and went to the King of Castile with his permission. He then tried to have John, the King of Castile lend his support to Muhammad VIII. The Christian King thus had an excellent opportunity to set the Muslims against each other. He advised Yusuf to send a deputation of selected persons to the King of Tunis and seek his help as well. The King of Tunis gave five hundred cavaliers and a substantial amount by way of help and sent Muhammad VIII on board his ship to Spain. When Muhammad VIII landed on the coast of Spain, he found the inhabitants of Almeria supporting him in the wake of efforts made by Yusuf. Muhammad IX sent his army to take on Muhammad VIII. When the rival forces came face to face a greater part of Muhammad IX's army changed sides and joined the rival camp. The rest fled back to Granada. Muhammad VIII advanced towards Granada and conquered it in 833 A.H. Muhammad IX was arrested and put to death.

After regaining the throne Muhammad VIII changed his ruling style on the advice of Yusuf and set himself to the task of bettering the lot of his subjects. He also attempted to make permanent peace with the Christian King but he agreed only on the condition of tribute, which Muhammad VIII declined. However, the King of Castile was himself facing disturbances in his territories and he could not challenge the Muslims. He invaded Granada in spite of his troubles. Both sides were engaged in a long drawn out battle in which victory and defeat came to both of them. The battle was still going on when Yusuf bin al-Ahmar, a close relative of Muhammad VIII rose in revolt against him. He staked his claim on the throne of Granada and entered into correspondence with the Christian King of Castile. He promised to

pay annual tribute to the Christian King if he captured Granada besides helping him with his army. The Christians took it as a gift from providence. The King of Castile then sent his forces to reinforce Yusuf's men. Muhammad VIII launched an attack and a heavy battle broke out. The King of Castile was himself present at the battle but the battle remained undecided. At last the King of Castile returned to Cordova along with Yusuf Ibn al-Ahmar and Muhammad VIII left for Granada.

The King of Castile held his court in Cordova and appointed Yusuf Ibn al-Ahmar as the King of Granada and promised all possible help. He then dispatched Yusuf at the head of an army to capture Granada. He reached Granada and stormed the city with the active help of the local Christians. The Christians were satisfied that the two Muslim sides were set against each other inviting death and destruction upon themselves. Sultan Muhammad VIII sent his Minister Yusuf to punish Yusuf Ibn al-Ahmar but the latter killed the former. On hearing this news the people of Granada felt disturbed and they expressed themselves against Muhammad VIII. Muhammad VIII saw the writing on the wall and left Granada for Malaga along with all his treasures and possessions.

### **Yusuf bin Al-Ahmar**

Yusuf bin al-Ahmar captured Granada and sent a letter to the King of Castile expressing his loyalty to him. He then started preparing to send an army to Malaga to arrest Muhammad VIII but he had not even sent the army when he passed away after ruling for only six months.

Immediately after hearing the news of Yusuf Ibn al-Ahmar's demise Muhammad VIII hurried to Granada and sat on the throne for the third time. He appointed Abdul Haq as his minister and Abdul Barr as his Commander-in-Chief. The Christians invaded Granada once again but the Commander-in-Chief fought them back. This defeat brought about discouragement in the Christian community and the rule of Granada became formidable once again. Unfortunately, civil war broke out at a time when there was an opportunity to improve the

lot of the Muslims and strengthen their military power. Ibn Uthman, the Governor of Almeria and nephew of Sultan Muhammad VIII revolted against him and instigated the people of Granada against their administration. When they favored his plan, he came to Granada, took over as the chief of the insurgents and captured Al-Hamra Palace and put Muhammad VIII in prison after dethroning him for the third time. Abdul Bar, the Commander-in-Chief fled from Granada, collected the well wishers and began to think of ways to release Sultan Muhammad VIII. He knew that if he brought to the surface any demand for the release of Muhammad VIII he would be done away with. With this in mind he incited another nephew of Muhammad VIII named Ibn Ismail to stake his claim to the throne. Ibn Ismail agreed to the proposal. He met Abdul Bar after exchanging letters with the King of Castile and after getting permission from him to take over. It was an opportunity for the Christians to make a political gain. Thus Sultan Ibn Uthman's territories faced a two-pronged attack from Ibn Ismail and the King of Castile. The campaign continued for a long time. In 852 A.H., the King of Aragon and King Arbonia (Catalonia) both Christians waged a war against the King of Castile. When he himself suffered a setback, he pulled back his army from the Muslim front. Because of this, Ibn Ismail also kept silent until the end of the civil war. When Sultan Ibn Uthman came to know that the King Aragon and King of Arbonia (Catalonia) formed an alliance against the King of Castile, he sent his envoy to both the Kings and extended his hand of friendship besides ensuring them of his help when needed. Thus Sultan Ibn Uthman attacked Castile in 854 A.H. and forced the Castilian troops to flee. He ravaged Murcia province and came back to Granada with huge spoils of war. The next year he launched an attack on Andalusia and plundered it like he did to Murcia. He could have captured Cordova but he paid no attention to it. Ibn Uthman continued to help the two Kings against the King of Castile until 858 A.H. The Christian King of Castile then dispatched Ibn Ismail to attack Ibn Uthman the next year. Since Ibn Ismail enjoyed the support of the majority of Muslim nobles Ibn Uthman was defeated. He fled and took refuge in the mountains while Ibn Ismail came to the throne of Granada.

## **Sultan Ibn Ismail**

Shortly after the enthronement of Ibn Ismail, John, the King of Castile died and was succeeded by his son. After John, his sons and grandsons resumed the battles against Ibn Ismail and the fighting lingered on until 870 A.H. During this series of battles Ibn Ismail's son, Abul Hasan achieved much renown. Ibn Ismail died in 870, and was succeeded by his son, Abul Hasan.

## **Sultan Abul Hasan**

Since Sultan Abul Hasan was also an experienced Commander, he continued to fight the Christians adequately. But the doom of Muslim rule was not far away. Ferdinand, the young King of Castile was married to Isabella, the princess of the Kingdom of Aragon and with this marriage Aragon and Castile joined to make a mighty Christian state. Both Ferdinand and Isabella were great fanatics and hated the Muslims as a whole. They, therefore, decided together to wipe out Muslim rule from Spain. Unaware of what was going on against him Abul Hasan felt it expedient to make peace with the Christians. But his friendly gesture was rudely responded to with the demand of annual tribute from him. Abul Hasan not only rejected the demand rather disdainfully he also wrote back that his (Abul Hasan's) mint was minting swords instead of gold coins so that the heads of the Christians could be cut off. This bold reply sent terror into the heart of Ferdinand and he didn't invade the Muslim territory for several years. Abul Hasan had made a firm resolve to live a life of freedom and sovereignty and preferred death to being ruled by the Christians.

Having heard of the Christian preparations Abul Hasan himself made an advance and took the Sakhra Fort from the Christians. Ferdinand was shocked to hear of the loss of the fort. By way of retaliation, he invaded Al-Hamma Fort treacherously and captured it rather easily for there was no garrison to put up any resistance. Muslim fighters had inflicted no harm on the Christians while invading the Sakhra Fort but the Christian troops mercilessly massacred Muslim men and women. When the sad news of the fall of Al-Hamma Fort reached Granada, there arose a tremendous outcry. Sultan Abul Hasan sent an



Arab chief to recover the fort and he went and besieged it. Hearing of this the ruler of Cordova set out at the head of an army to save Al-Hamma Fort. Being informed of this, the Arab chief left a part of his troops to continue the siege while the rest of them he took with him to stop the advancement of troops from Cordova. When the two forces clashed, the ruler of Cordova fled the battlefield. However, the ruler of Seville, another Christian chief, appeared with a huge army. Since the number of troops outside the fort was very few, the Muslim troops raised the siege and returned to Granada and the fort was not restored. Since Al-Hamma Fort was very strong and lay near Granada it was a heavy loss for the Muslims.

In Jumad al-Awwal 887 A.H., Sultan Abul Hasan found out that Ferdinand was moving towards Granada at the head of a huge army. Abul Hasan also came out of Granada with his troops and both the armies clashed at Loja on the border of Granada. Ferdinand was defeated and the winning side collected heavy spoils of war. Unfortunately, Abu Abdullah, the son of Abul Hasan revolted against his father. Thus, close on the heels of his victory over Ferdinand, he was informed that his son had pronounced himself sovereign after capturing Almeria, Alpujarras and Granada. Abul Hasan had to remain at Malaga while Granada and half of the eastern areas came under the sway of Abu Abdullah Muhammad. However, the other half of the western part remained with Sultan Abul Hasan. Thus the division of this small Islamic state attracted the greedy eyes of the Christian rulers and Abu Abdullah Muhammad set himself to making preparations for taking the other half from his father. Thus, the allied Christian forces of Seville, Ecija (known as Estadja by the Arabs) and Sarish first attacked Malaga but they were defeated and the rulers of Seville and Sarish were arrested along with two thousand troops. The rest were either killed or forced to flee for their lives. When Abul Hasan returned to Malaga he found his son ready to capture Malaga too. Thus the father and the son faced each other and the fate favored the father. The son, Abu Abdullah Muhammad fled to Granada. When Abul Hasan entered Malaga victoriously, he became paralyzed and lost his eyesight. With this news, Abu Abdullah Muhammad felt safe from his father and attacked the Christian territories. He stormed into Lucena but the commander of the Christian forces played a trick on

the inexperienced Muslim ruler. He attacked the Muslim troops from an ambush while they were going back carelessly laden with booty. All the troops were put to death and Abu Abdullah Muhammad was captured and sent to the King of Castile. Now the people of Granada invited Abul Hasan to take over the administration of Granada. The Sultan declined the offer due to his disability and asked his brother Abu Abdullah Zaghāl to sit on the throne of Granada and he himself abdicated the throne and took to a life of seclusion.

### **Sultan Abu Abdullah Zaghāl**

Having come to the throne Abu Abdullah Zaghāl embarked on his plan to regularize and improve his administration. But a huge Christian army attacked Malaga province and captured the forts lying mismanaged and neglected. They also besieged Baqwan Fort and shelled it so heavily that one wall of the fort gave it. The besieged Muslims although few in number came out and fought so gallantly that the huge Christian army suffered a heavy loss. At last the brave Muslim fighters succumbed to their injuries one by one, and the fort went to Christians. On Shaban 19, 890 A.H., Sultan Zaghāl left Granada to manage the affairs of the bordering areas and was camping in a field when a Christian army caught them unaware and began to kill Muslim troops. When the fighting and killing began to advance towards Sultan Zaghāl, the Muslim fighters stood in the way and charged at the enemy so violently, that the Christian fighters took to their heels leaving behind thousands of dead and injured. The Muslims gave them chase and captured their artillery. King Ferdinand was also moving forward with a huge army when he came across the runaway defeated Christian soldiers. When he heard that the Muslim fighters had captured their artillery and had strengthened the fort with it, he decided to return.

Despite some successes, here and there Ferdinand was utterly convinced that the annihilation of the Muslims, as a whole was not an easy proposition. Even though the area of the Islamic state was much reduced they could have won the whole of Spain with their swords if they had made a joint venture and fought like one man as they had done during the times of Tariq and Musa. The wisdom and far-

sightedness of Ferdinand stopped him from further campaigns against Muslims. He thought it better to use tricks and deception. Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Abul Hasan the prisoner of the battle of Lucena was in his possession.

He called Abu Abdullah Muhammad before him and talked to him in very polite words and instilled in his mind that he was the rightful heir of the Granada rule and his uncle Zaghāl had usurped his right to rule. He also assured him all help in case he was able to take Granada from Zaghāl. He tried to bring home to him that his only interest lay in a good Islamic State enjoying peace and prosperity behaving like a good neighbor. Abu Abdullah came straight to Malaga highly excited and intoxicated with the sense of ensuing success in his mission. He met the people and asked them to follow him to victory and safety from Christian invasions. Since they were desperately in need of peace and safety they made no delay in extending their support for him. He easily became the ruler of Malaga. Even though Zaghāl attempted to put down the insurgence, active support from the Christians inhabiting the Muslim territories caused his mission to fail. Abu Abdullah then asked his uncle, Zaghāl for the important center of Loja and promised a joint attack on Ferdinand in lieu of this coveted gift. When Zaghāl found most of his people inclined to the demand of Abu Abdullah, he gave away Loja to his nephew but Abu Abdullah very treacherously handed over Loja to Ferdinand. Abu Abdullah then left to besiege the forts of Albirah, Maslin and Sakhra and he gave away all these forts to Ferdinand after capturing them with the active help of the Christian King. Thus what was a Herculean task for Ferdinand became easier with the support of Abu Abdullah. Now the eyes of the Muslims opened and they charged him as an agent of the Christian King who captured cities and forts and handed them over to the King of Castile. Now the people of Malaga renewed their loyalty to Sultan Zaghāl and removed all signs and traces of Christian rule. Ferdinand attacked Malaga with a huge army and sent warships to the coast of Malaga as well. Zaghāl came out from Granada to arrive at Malaga but Abu Abdullah Muhammad captured Granada in his absence. Zaghāl moved towards Granada leaving Malaga under the siege of Ferdinand. When he heard that Abu Abdullah Muhammad captured Granada, he stopped in Guadix. The people of Malaga checked the

advances of the Christian troops with exemplary courage and determination and requested the rulers of Morocco, Tunis, Egypt and Turkey to save them from the jaws of the Christian monsters. However, none of them paid heed to their entreaty, and in a state of utter disappointment, they handed over Malaga to the Christians. When they met their doom as a result of their disunity and discord and felt it deeply, they extended their hand of friendship towards the Christians but they rejected the request scornfully and demanded the key of the city. When the Christian ruler subdued Malaga, he ordered the arrest of every Muslim and seizure of their wealth and property. They enslaved fifteen thousand Muslims and the rest were banished from Malaga without goods and chattels and many of them died of starvation. Some of them reached the African coast and settled there. Ferdinand then ravaged the surrounding areas of Malaga and destroyed the cities and forts and drove away all the Muslim population. The Christian ruler was set to obliterate all signs of Muslim rule from Spain. He then arrived in Gaudix and extended his hand of friendship towards Zaghāl and tempted him with the rule of Granada. Zaghāl welcomed the friendship of Ferdinand for he wanted to see Abu Abdullah Muhammad's disaster. Thus, he gave away Gaudix to Ferdinand and accompanied him. Ferdinand won Almeria without any difficulty with Zaghāl on his side. Abu Abdullah Muhammad was happy to find his uncle, Zaghāl in the clutches of Ferdinand. Sitting in the magnificent al-Hamra Palace he was dreaming of his exclusive rule in Granada. At last calamity knocked at Abu Abdullah's door. He received a letter from Ferdinand ordering him to hand over Granada. Shocked and stunned he read out the calamitous letter to the influential people of Granada. He then said to the people that Zaghāl had persuaded Ferdinand to take possession of Granada and al-Hamra Palace and also to fight with him. The people of Granada were fully aware of the depravity of Abu Abdullah Muhammad in destroying the Islamic rule and his role as a stooge in serving the nefarious design of Ferdinand at the cost of Muslim honor and unity. They favored fighting with the enemy. Abu Abdullah Muhammad had to bow before public opinion. Consultations were still going on when Ferdinand of Castile arrived with a huge army and laid siege around Granada. The citizens rose with courage and

determination and fought gallantly against the Christians. Aware of the bravery and resolution of the Muslim fighters the shrewd Ferdinand decided to put off his campaign against Granada for the time being. He raised the siege and went back, Abu Abdullah took advantage of the respite and marched to some of the forts that had already been captured by the Christians. He recovered those forts and put a large number of Christian fighters to death. He then came back to Granada, strengthened his troops and came out again for further attacks. During his fresh campaigns, he captured some of the towns in Alpujarras and restored the Andarsh Fort and unfurled the flag of Islam atop by throwing away the Christian one. The entire population of Alpujarras showed their loyalty to the Muslim ruler.

Abu Abdullah's uncle Zaghāl was also staying somewhere in Alpujarras. He felt terrified with the rising power of Abu Abdullah and informed Ferdinand that the growing strength of Abu Abdullah could prove menacing for the Christian rule if not checked right away. Zaghāl utterly ignored the cause of Islam and rose to resist the advancement of Abu Abdullah's forces with the help of Christian troops. The courage and bravery of the people of Granada filled Abu Abdullah with so much enthusiasm that he pounced upon Hamdan, Markab, and Shalobania. Before the victory of Shalobania Abu Abdullah came to know that Ferdinand of Castile was proceeding to Granada and so Abu Abdullah turned towards Granada. Putting aside Granada Ferdinand reached Gaudix and committed a large-scale massacre of the Muslims and banished the rest. He also razed the Andarsh Fort to the ground and returned after rampaging through the cities and forts that came in his way.

On the way back to Castile, Ferdinand told Zaghāl rather rudely that he was no longer in need of him and the maximum he could do for him was to allow him to go out of the bounds of his country. With this order, Zaghāl left Spain and went to Africa and passed the rest of his life at Tlemcen (city in Northwest Algeria) in obscurity. Ferdinand practiced utmost patience and endurance in implementing his plans of gradually wiping out all signs and traces of the Muslims from the face of Spain. The people of Granada also lost courage with the constant news of the massacre of Muslims and the devastation of their cities.

## **End of Islamic Rule in Spain**

On 12 Jumad al-Awwal 896 A.H., Ferdinand reached Granada along with Queen Isabella at the head of huge army with heavy artillery. With his arrival he embarked on a rampage ravaging greenery, gardens, crops and the populated areas and set a river of Muslim blood to flow. He set up a military cantonment in front of Granada and besieged the city. Discouraged and disheartened, the Muslim population once again broke the siege and plunged into fighting against the surrounding troops sacrificing their lives. The siege continued for eight months and this was the last Muslim population in the whole of the Spanish peninsula. When winter set in and snow capped the mountains and obstructed supply routes, they told Abu Abdullah to go to war with the Christians. They showed their determination to go down fighting on the battlefield rather than to die of starvation. They reminded him of Tariq bin Zeyad when he crushed one hundred thousand well-equipped Christian soldiers with a handful of troops, and their Muslim fighters numbered nearly twenty thousand so they had no reason to fear one hundred thousand Christian troops. Abu Abdullah was now fully convinced that the surging flood of his people, if ignored, would result in open revolt against his rule. He convened an emergency meeting of his ministers, nobles, religious scholars and celebrities of the surrounded city at al-Hamra Palace. Abu Abdullah could not say addressing them that the Christian forces would never raise their siege without capturing the city what could then be done to tackle the problem? Abu Abdullah was so depressed than nothing more could be expected of him at that moment, and then the entire audience said in one voice, "It is better to sign a peace treaty with the King of Castile". Commander Musa bin Abul Ghassani got up in zeal and said, "There is still hope of success. We must not lose hope and fight to the finish. I hope we shall be able to drive the Christians away and force them to raise the siege". Although the citizens had the same opinion that Musa had expressed none among the audience supported his advice. They expressed fear that in case they lost the battle none of the Muslims would be left alive. They wanted peace and safety for their lives and property. Since the subjects and soldiers had expressed themselves in favor of giving

battle to the enemy, Abu Abdullah Muhammad sent his minister, Abul Qasim Abdul Malik on a secret mission to buy peace from Ferdinand. Since the Christians also were tired of the long-drawn siege of the Muslim city and they wanted some honorable course to arrive at a final decision, they welcomed the peace proposal and readily agreed to sign it. In order to keep the peace talks a secret Abul Qasim would go to the Christian camp in the darkness of night. The peace treaty was, however, signed by Abu Abdullah Muhammad and Ferdinand after some initial differences.

### **Peace Treaty with the Christians**

The peace document contained the following conditions:

1. The Muslims will enjoy the liberty of either living in the country or leaving it. No harm will be caused to the life and property of any Muslim.
2. The Christians will not seek to interfere in religious affairs of the Muslims.
3. No Christian will intrude into mosques.
4. Mosques and trusts will remain intact.
5. Muslim affairs will be decided by Muslim judges according to the Codes of *Shari'ah*
6. Prisoners on both sides will be set free.
7. A Muslim intending to go to Africa will be sent on board ship.
8. The converted Christians will not be forced to abandon Islam.
9. The spoils of war possessed by the Muslims will not be recovered.
10. No tax other than the existing ones will be levied on the Muslims.
11. No tax will be realized from the Muslims for a period of three years; they will also remain exempt from the existing tax for this period.
12. The Government of Al-Bashrat will be handed over to Sultan Abu Abdullah.

13. After sixty days from the signing of the treaty Al-Hamra Palace and the artillery and other means of warfare, which it contains, will be given to the Christians.
14. Within sixty days from signing, the treaty will be completed with all its conditions.
15. Granada city will be left free for one year. After one year the Christians will capture it fulfilling the conditions mentioned above.

The treaty was signed on 1 Rabia al-Awwal 897 A.H. The event could not remain a secret from the people of the city and the Army. There was widespread discontent and Abu Abdullah was charged with destroying the Muslim state. He grew extremely anxious and handed over Al-Hamra Palace to the Christians for fear of public insurrection. Ferdinand asked Mandhurah, the Archbishop of Spain to first step in the city and set a cross atop of the highest tower of Al-Hamra Palace pulling down all Islamic signs so that the King along with his queen can watch the change before making their entry into the city. When Abu Abdullah noticed the arrival of Mandhurah in the Palace, he came out at the head of fifty chiefs on horseback. The entire city looked deserted and its people grief-stricken and deeply distressed. Abu Abdullah then moved forward to the King of Castile and handed over the keys, saying: "O Mighty King! We are now your subjects and entrust this country of ours to you for it was the Will of Allah. We trust that you will treat your subjects gently and generously". Ferdinand wanted to utter some consoling words but Abu Abdullah went ahead and left for al-Bashrat after meeting Queen Isabella. His relatives and goods and chattels had already been sent ahead. Meanwhile the silver cross glittered atop the tower in the sunshine and the Christian King stepped into al-Hamra Palace with royal grandeur. When Abu Abdullah reached a mountain top, he turned towards Granada and recalled his past magnificence and burst into tears. His mother who accompanied him remarked:

"When you could not save your country despite being a brave soldier what is the use of shedding tears like women now?"



## **Christians' Atrocities on the Muslims' of Spain**

Soon after capturing Al-Hamra Palace the Christians forgot all the conditions mentioned in the peace treaty. They captured Granada and bought Alpujarras from Abu Abdullah for a paltry sum of money, with the result Abu Abdullah went to Morocco and became an employee of the King of Morocco and died after serving the King for many years. Ferdinand set up a Christian law court throughout the country where Muslims were brought on untrue and fabricated charges and were burnt to death as punishment enjoined by the law court. Actually, they were punished for being Muslims.

A general order was issued in 904 A.H., to confess Christianity or face death, with the result that the Muslims escaped to the hills and accepted a miserable life instead of renouncing Islam. Some of the Christians who had already converted to Islam were baptized. But they, however, kept sticking to Islam and worshipped Allah inside their houses.

Those Muslims who opted for migrating to Africa were provided with ships and they boarded the ships with their books and other valuables. However, many of the ships were sunk in the sea before reaching the African coast.

Finally, not a single Muslim was to be found in the whole of Spain. They were all put to the sword or burnt or drowned.

## **A Glance at the Islamic Rule in Spain**

Even though Arabian rule in Spain was autocratic like the righteous era it was, however, dominated by a democratic temper. The command of Caliphs and the Codes of *Shari'ah* were applied equally to all and sundry. A certain Christian lodged a complaint against Abdur Rahman II of the Umayyad dynasty in a law court and the ruler lost the case and had to fulfill his obligations like a slave. The judge in the Muslim courts had full power to punish the Caliph. Police administration was at its best. Government officials roamed about the market-place checking business transactions and the prices of commodities. They had set up hospitals and dispensaries and a

network of roads and canals all over the country. Caliph Hisham had built a giant bridge across the river, Wadi al-Kabir. In the art of warfare Muslims were the most civilized of all. The Muslims of Spain were the first to invent tools for dismantling forts. During their 800-year rule Muslim rulers taught savage Christians a lesson on how to behave in a civilized and humane manner in the wake of victory. While the Christians behaved wildly and violently massacring Muslim men, women and children, the Muslim conquerors spared the Christian population following their victories. Moreover, they brought about peace and prosperity to the Christian lands in the wake of their victories. They developed agriculture to the extent that it became a perfected art. They turned hundreds of thousands of square miles of barren and deserted land in Spain into gardens of fruits, trees and greenery. Spain and the entire European continent came to know of rice, cotton, saffron, pomegranate, and peach through the Muslims. They produced olives and dates in Andalusia and Seville and grapes in Sarish, Granada and Malaga, besides other agricultural development. They were the first to find mineral deposits in Spain and explore mines of gold, silver, iron, mercury, copper, ruby, and sapphire. Granada was the last sign of Muslim rule in Spain but even that small rule left magnificent monuments of Muslim glory and grandeur. The Muslims of Spain invented cement of such an amazing quality that Al-Hamra Palace is still an object of wonder for the tourists of the world. It was built by the Muslim rulers of Granada on a very high mound under the shade of the snow-clad peaks of the Sierra Nevada. It had within its walls such beautiful and green gardens and fruit trees that the like of which was never witnessed by the sky. During their rule, the Muslims established all over the country universities, schools, laboratories and magnificent libraries, which contained resources for academic research of all kinds. In the universities of Cordova, Seville, Malaga, Saragossa, Lisbon, Jaen, and Toledo students from Italy, France, Germany, and England would come to receive education in various sciences and arts. The Muslim scholars translated books on Greek philosophy into their own languages. Ibn Rushd too was a Muslim of Spain who was superior even to Aristotle. Muslim scientists set up such laboratories and developed Astronomy to such an extent that the entire Europe followed them. The astrolabe, the soul of all laboratories, was invented by none but the Muslims of Spain. In

medical science and surgery they made such progress that until recent times the whole of Europe benefited from their books. They made advances in Zoology and Botany and they developed separate gardens and factories for this purpose. Manufacturing paper out of cotton and jute was their remarkable achievement. In terms of modern warfare Alfonso XI has written:

"Muslims of the city would hurl resounding objects and apple-sized iron shells. These shells covered such a long distance that they hit the enemy ranks directly and at times fell beyond the lines."

This statement makes it clear beyond a doubt that when the Muslims used artillery and gunpowder the Christians were unaware of all these things. The writer of *Senin al-Islam* writes that some of the Muslims of Spain had discovered America as far back as 441 A.H. but this discovery was not made famous. It was Columbus who later achieved fame as the man who discovered America.

It was the Muslims' deep love for knowledge and their great fondness for the arts, literature and philosophy that opened the doors of art and science for the Europeans. For eight hundred years the Muslims were the teachers of the Europeans. Christian nobles, during this long period, took pride, in learning from and following the Muslims in language, style, expression and other things of this kind. They wrote Arabic prose and poetry purely in Muslim style. In French and Italian languages most of the words related to shipping and naval activity come from Arabic. And this provides ample proof that they learned about shipping activities from the Muslims. Most of the words concerning hunting and recreation are Arabic in origin while names of medicines and astronomical terms that are current in European languages belong to Arabic.

It is worth-mentioning here that when Muslim fighters conquered Spain in the first century Hijra they didn't force a single person to accept Islam. They would embrace Islam because of its inherent traits and superiority. But, when, the Christians captured Muslim territories they put all kinds of pressures upon the Muslims to confess Christianity and when they failed in their mission they massacred hundreds of thousands of Muslims, burned them alive and drowned them.

## Chapter 12

# Morocco and North Africa

Some historians are of the opinion that the progeny of Ibrahim عليه السلام Bani Israel settled in Morocco. Roman and Greek dynasties also ruled these territories. The world-renowned Carthage belonged to North Africa. The Goths had also taken Morocco by storm as they did in Iberia (Spain). The Berbers inhabited Morocco and its adjoining eastern territories and were formed, in fact, from the totality of the Arabs, Syrians, Egyptians, Greeks, Persians, and Romans. Territorial conditions and climatic influences carved them out as a people distinct from all others in respect of taste, temperament and disposition which made them inclined to harshness, cruelty and barbarity and they remained so until they embraced Islam. Whenever they forgot their Islamic discipline their old sense of enmity, rivalry and feuds rose again.

Morocco was conquered by Uqba bin Nafe. Even though it revolted against the Muslim rule each time it was subdued. Musa bin Nusayr, Governor of Africa and Morocco had entrusted the rule of Morocco to Tariq bin Ziyad. Tariq and Musa bin Nusayr then conquered Spain. Shortly after the conquests of Morocco and Spain, the Berbers started

insurgent activities. In Spain they were easily crushed but their uprising in North Africa lingered on for a longer period. Such a disturbing situation drew the attention of forces antagonistic to Islam towards this country.

## Idrisia Rule

### Idris

We have already made mention of Imam Muhammad bin Abdullah and his family while dealing with the Abbasid dynasty and how they were ruined in Makkah. A member of the same family named Idris reached Morocco along with his servant. He settled in Prolila whose chief Abdul Hameed greeted him honorably. Gradually Idris became popular among Zawagha, Lawata, Zanata, Sadrota, Meknes and the Ghanaza clans of the Berbers. With the efforts of Ishaq bin Muhammad bin Abdul Hameed most of the Muslim clans among the Berbers took the oath of allegiance to Idris's Caliphate. In a very short period Idris built a strong army and waged  *Jihad*  on those Berber clans, which still were outside the circle of Islam. After subduing them he managed to teach them Islam and Idris became their Caliph or Sultan.

Idris attacked Tlemcen and the Governor of the province expressed his loyalty to him. Idris made it his capital and built a mosque there. He strengthened his military power very rapidly. His quick progress and expanding area of power and influence made Caliph Harun Rashid anxious. However, he sent his slave Sulaiman bin Jarir to do away with Idris. Sulaiman appeared before Idris as an opponent of Harun Rashid. Idris believed him and eulogized him among his courtiers.

### His Death

Sulaiman gave Idris a kind of tooth powder, which choked him to death and Sulaiman escaped safely.

### Idris II

Soon after the death of Idris his slave Rashid brought to the notice of the people that a Berber slave-girl named Kanzah was pregnant by Idris and they should, therefore, make the oath of allegiance to the

child after its birth. In this way, Rashid was able to keep intact the country ruled by Idris. The Berber slave-girl gave birth to a male child. Rashid asked the people to take *ba'it* at the hand of the child and the people did accordingly. They made *ba'it* when he was weaned and once again when he was a boy of twelve. The same year Ibn Aghlab, the Governor of Africa incited the Berbers against Rashid and he was killed. However, this did not break the *ba'it*. The boy was also named Idris and came to be known as Idris II or Idris Junior. After Rashid, Abu Khalid bin Yazid bin Ilyas Abdi was appointed as his instructor.

## Conquests

Being aware of the art of statesmanship Idris II appointed Mus'ab bin Isa Azdi as his Minister. He then gradually expanded his territories and captured almost the whole of Morocco. Men in large numbers from Arabia, Spain, Africa, Egypt, Syria and other far off places came to Idris II in search of peace and prosperity and added to the splendor and activity of the country. Idris shifted his capital from Prolila, a small town Fez where he laid the foundation of a new city, which flourished very quickly. After initial conflicts with the Berbers Idris succeeded in dominating every tribe and Morocco become a country wholly and solely ruled by Idris II, independent of the Abbasid Caliphate.

## Muhammad bin Idris

Idris II or Junior died in 213 A.H. and was succeeded by his son Muhammad. It so happened about the same time that Sulaiman bin Abdullah bin Hasan bin Muthana bin Hasan bin Ali bin Abi Talib, the full brother of Idris I reached Tlemcen via Egypt and Africa. The Berbers took the oath of allegiance at his hand he was able to found his rule in Tlemcen.

Kanizah, the mother of Idris II and the grandmother of Muhammad bin Idris put forward a suggestion that Muhammad alone should not rule the entire country and his brothers should also be given various parts of the country to set up their independent rule. Her proposal was accepted. Accordingly, Muhammad was given Fez and its surrounding areas while among his brothers, Qasim got Tangier, Sayut received Taitwan, and Umar was given Tabkisyan, Targha and

the rule of Dahajah and Ghamrah tribes. Daud received Hamarah, Matalsol, Tazi and Meknes and Gheyatha tribes. Abdullah got Baghwat, Nafis, Jibal, Madamdah, Lamata, Saus, al-Aqsa. Yahya got Basila, Ara'ish, Darogha and Isa was given Shala, Sala, Azmur and Tamasna and Hamza got Walila and its outskirts. Those who were still young boys were put under the care of their grandmother, Kanizah. Tlemcen was already captured by Sulaiman bin Abdullah. Thus, the mighty Empire of Morocco was cut into pieces by acting upon the suggestion of a woman. After a short time Isa of Azmor attacked his brother Muhammad bin Idris. Muhammad asked his brother Qasim to help in the fight but he refused to obey. He then sent Umar to face Isa and the former defeated the latter and attacked the occupied territories. Muhammad then asked Umar to punish Qasim who had defied his order.

Umar attacked Qasim and Qasim was defeated after a bloody encounter. Qasim passed the rest of his life in seclusion, practicing piety and purity of life. Umar attacked the territory of Qasim and thus added to his strength and power yet he remained loyal to his brother, Muhammad. When Umar died in 220 A.H. Muhammad made his son Ali bin Umar his father's successor.

## **His Death**

Seven months after the death of Umar, Muhammad bin Idris also died in 221 A.H. He had appointed his 9 year old son, Ali as his successor and crown prince before his death.

## **Ali bin Muhammad**

After Muhammad the courtiers and the powerful section of the society were pleased to pledge their support to Ali bin Muhammad. He set himself to rule his country properly. He kept peace throughout his thirteen-year rule. He died in 234 A.H. and appointed his brother Yahya bin Muhammad as his successor at the time of his death.

## **Yahya bin Muhammad**

Yahya bin Muhammad added much to the power and splendor of his rule. During his tenure the Idris Caliphate came to be counted among

the most magnificent states in the world. The population of Fez flourished, trade reached its peak and religious scholars and intellectuals came to join his court.

### **Yahya bin Yahya**

Yahya bin Muhammad was succeeded by his son Yahya bin Yahya. His misconduct displeased his people and they rose in revolt against him under the guidance of Abdur Rahman bin Abi Suhail and deposed Yahya bin Yahya and banished him from Fez. Ashamed and dishearten he died shortly after that. Ali bin Umar was still the ruler of his state and after the shameful exit of Yahya bin Yahya he came to Fez and ascended the throne. Shortly after that, Abdur Razzaq Kharji rose in revolt and captured most of their territory and the Idrisi dynasty passed through a precarious state.

### **Yahya bin Idris bin Umar**

Yahya bin Idris bin Umar bin Idris Junior became strong enough to capture Morocco in 292 A.H. and restored the lost splendor of Idrisi dynasty. He is considered the greatest King among the Idrisi leaders. At that time, the Ubaidite (Fatimid) ruled over Africa. The Ubaidite army invaded Morocco in 305 A.H. Yahya bin Idris came out to give battle but was defeated after fierce fighting. Yahya came back to Fez and made efforts to buy peace. He was given peace on condition that he would show obedience and pay some money annually in cash as a token of loyalty. When Talha bin Yahya bin Idris, the son of Yahya bin Idris became the ruler he was captured by the Ubaidite troops. He had to pass two years in captivity and settled in Mahdiya after being released and died there in 331 A.H.

By 309 A.H., Morocco and Fez came under the rule of the Ubaidites (Fatimids). In 313 A.H., Hasan bin Muhammad bin Qasim bin Idris rose against Raihan Katami, the Ubaidite Governor of Fez and established Idrisite rule once again in Fez. But the Ubaidite commander, Musa bin Abi al-Aliya invaded and captured Fez and Hasan was put to death. Most of the small districts of Morocco were still ruled by the Idrisities. They at last turned towards the Sultan of Spain who captured Morocco and drove away the Ubaidites. Morocco become a province of the Cordova rule.



## **End of Idrisite Rule**

Sulaiman bin Abdullah, already mentioned, was brother of Idris senior or Idris I. He had established his rule in Tlemcen and Tiarret. Muhammad bin Sulaiman succeeded his father but civil war broke out among Banu Sulaiman with the result the country broke into small pieces.

## **The Aghlabs of Africa**

During Umayyad dynasty the viceroy of the Berber countries of Northern Africa lived in the Qairwan city of Tripoli and the governors of Morocco and Spain were appointed on the advice of the Viceroy of Qairwan. During the Abbasid rule, when Spain and Morocco broke away from the central government, the status of the Viceroy of Qairwan was reduced to Governor. Since this territory was also like Morocco with respect to the political climate and the Berbers that inhabited it, changing of Governors and revolts had become common.

## **Ibrahim bin Aghlab**

In the wake of frequent changes of the Governor, Muhammad bin Muqatil took over the province, once again he had to face the displeasure of the citizens. They wrote Ibrahim bin Aghlab to request the Caliph for the province. Following this message Ibrahim bin Aghlab submitted to Caliph Harun Rashid that he spent one hundred thousand dinars from the Egyptian revenue to run the administration of Tripoli while the province gave nothing in return. After this statement he promised to send forty thousand dinars annually from Tripoli without asking for a farthing from the central government if the province was given to him. Caliph Harun Rashid agreed and issued Ibrahim bin Aghlab a letter of authority to take over the administration of the province. Since the change was in the public interest peace prevailed in the entire territory. Ibrahim bin Aghlab took over the rule of Tripoli and founded a new city adjacent to Qairwan and named it Abbasia.

## Battles

A person named Hamdis rose against the Abbasids. Ibrahim bin Aghlab sent Imran bin Mujahid at the head of a strong army to put down the revolt. Hamdis was crushed after a fierce battle and ten thousand insurgents lost their lives. Following this Ibrahim bin Aghlab paid constant attention to the far west. Idris had already died in Morocco and Rashid was running the administration in the name of Idris Junior. Ibrahim Aghlab attracted the Berbers with costly gifts and rewards with the result that a party of the Berbers beheaded Rashid and sent his head to Ibrahim bin Aghlab in Qairwan. But, during this period, the citizens of Tripoli rose in revolt against Sufyan bin Muhajir, the Governor of Ibrahim bin Aghlab and forcibly drove him out of the province. Ibrahim sent troops to Tripoli and regained his lost territory. Imran bin Mujahid rose strongly against Ibrahim in Tunis in 195 A.H. and captured Qairwan. Ibrahim bin Aghlab dug trenches around Abbasia and took refuge in his guarded city. Imran besieged the city for a long period of nearly one-year. Although a number of encounters took place between them, neither one of them gained any advantage. Ibrahim informed Caliph Harun Rashid about the state of affairs and requested money, which the Caliph sent without delay. Ibrahim bin Aghlab then attracted a large number of Imran's troops by the lure of large sums. Imran grew anxious with the deteriorating condition of his military power, raised his siege and went to Zabin. Ibrahim then sent his son, Abdullah, to Tripoli in 196 A.H., but a few days after assuming power he suffered a serious military revolt with the result he was surrounded in his palace. He was given peace only on the promise of leaving Tripoli. Abdullah came out of Tripoli but stayed on the outskirts where he began to collect some Berbers around himself by the power of the purse. He then invaded Tripoli and captured it. A few days after this event Ibrahim bin Aghlab deposed Abdullah from Tripoli and appointed Sufyan bin Mudar as Governor. The people of Tripoli revolted again and forced him out of Tripoli and Sufyan went straight to Ibrahim in Abbasia. Ibrahim sent Sufyan again to Tripoli along with his son, Abdullah and after a large-scale blood bath peace came to Tripoli but for a very short time. It was actually a lull before the storm. Abdul

Wahab bin Abdur Rahman bin Rustam then invaded Tripoli at the head of a strong Berber force and killing and bloodshed broke out.

### **His Death**

Ibrahim bin Aghlab passed away in Abbasia in 196 A.H. When the news reached Tripoli, Abdullah made peace with Abdul Wahab. He gave the outskirts of Tripoli to Abdullah and kept the city of Tripoli under him. He then went towards Qairwan.

### **Abdullah bin Ibrahim**

Ibrahim bin Aghlab appointed his son Abdullah as his crown prince before his death and exhorted his second son Ziyadatullah to obey his brother. Abdullah bin Ibrahim bin Aghlab arrived at Qairwan in 197 A.H. and took over the administration and succumbed to a wound to the ear in 201 A.H., after ruling for five years. His brother, Ziyadatullah, succeeded him.

### **Ziyadatullah**

Ibrahim Aghlab had received the authority of ruling the country on contract from Caliph Harun Rashid. After coming to the throne Ziyadatullah received a letter from Mamun Rashid ordering him to invoke for Abdullah bin Tahir from the pulpit. Ziyadatullah felt this to be problematic and while bidding farewell to the messenger of the Caliph he sent some valuable gifts along with a few dinars bearing the stamp of Idrisite rule making clear that he could at anytime, build up his relation with the Idrisite government.

### **Revolts**

Shortly after that Zeyad bin Sahl, one of his military officers, revolted against him and besieged Bajah city. Ziyadatullah sent his army, which captured Zeyad and put him to death. Mansur Tirmidi revolted in Tanjah (Tangier) and invaded Tunis and Ismail bin Sufyan, Governor of Tunis was killed in the encounter. Mansur captured Tunis. Ziyadatullah sent his cousin and Minister Aghlab bin Abdullah at the head of an army and told him at the time of departure that he

would kill him if he came back defeated. Mansur defeated Aghlab bin Abdullah. On the way back to Qairwan his troops killed him out of fear for their lives and joined Mansur. Mansur became powerful and captured Qairwan. Ziyadatullah took refuge in Abbasia. After a siege of forty days Ziyadatullah became victorious and Mansur fled to Tunis. Various generals of his Army captured different parts of the country and only a very small part remained under the possession of Ziyadatullah. However, he gradually subdued all other rulers and annexed their territories.

## Conquest of the Island of Sicily

The Caesar of Constantinople ruled over Sicily where his governor carried out his orders. Caesar sent a crusading General, Qaseal to replace him and he appointed a Roman named Femi as Admiral of the Navy. Femi took the African coast by storm and established himself as a force to be feared on the sea. At this time, Caesar wrote to the Governor of Sicily to arrest and send the Admiral to him. When the Admiral came to know of this order, he went into Sicily and captured the city of Martusa. Fierce fighting took place between the Governor and the Admiral in which the former was killed. Admiral Femi then captured the whole of the Island and declared himself the sovereign ruler. He then put a person named Blat as the administrator of part of the Island. Mikhail, the cousin of Blat ruled over another part of the Island. These two brothers jointly rose against Femi. After a number of encounters they captured Syracuse. Femi took refuge with his fleet, and then came to Ziyadatullah for help. He sent Asad bin Furat, the Qadi of Qairwan with him at the head of a detachment.

The island of Sicily was first invaded by the Muslims during the Caliphate of Muawiyah bin Abu Sufyan and was led by Abdullah bin Qays Fazari it was done as a strategy to destabilize the Romans and this happened in 33 A.H. Musa bin Nusayr, the Viceroy of Africa, invaded the Island in 85 A.H. and the Island was attacked again by a commander of Caliph Yazid bin Abdul Malik in 102 A.H. Bishr bin Safwan Kalbi attacked it in 109 A.H., during the Caliphate of Hisham bin Abdul Malik. The Muslims won victories in all these encounters and brought large amounts of booty and many captives. Mustanir bin

Harth, the General of Ubaidah bin Abdur Rahman Qaisi, the viceroy of Tripoli launched an attack on Sicily but it failed due to a storm at sea and the sinking of his ships. In 122 A.H., Ubaidullah bin Hijab, the Governor of Africa sent Habib bin Ubaidullah along with his son, Abdur Rahman bin Habib to Sicily. Abdur Rahman bin Habib got off at the coast and started winning victories and made his way into Sicily up to Syracuse, its capital. The ruler of Sicily agreed to hand over the Island to Abdur Rahman bin Habib but the Island was taken out of Islamic rule before long. The ruler of Africa once again made an assault on Sicily in 135 A.H. but the Muslim powers could not look towards Sicily until 212 A.H.

Femi came to Ziyadatullah and persuaded him to conquer the Island. Ziyadatullah sent the Qadi of Qairwan, Asad bin Furat with a fleet of one hundred ships besides the ships of Femi. He instructed the commander to annex Sicily and set up a permanent Islamic Government after winning it and obliterating all signs and traces of the Romans. The war fleet left in the middle of Rabia al-Awwal 212 A.H. and reached the coast of Sicily after the third day. Blat, the ruler of Sicily sent an army to face the Muslim invaders. A battle between the two forces broke out and the Muslim troops moved ahead crushing the Christian fighters. Even though Femi was accompanying the Muslim army, he was growing sad and dejected with the winning spree of the Muslim fighters. He started sending secret information and advice to the Christians, which proved injurious to the Muslim strategy. However, the forward march of the Muslim troops could not be checked and it resulted in the death of Blat. Femi also met his doom when the Christians of Sicily appointed another man as their ruler in place of Blat and kept fighting the Muslim army. Qadi Asad bin Furat laid a siege around Syracuse but he died during this siege in Shaban, 213 A.H.

The Muslim troops elected Muhammad bin Abul Jawari in place of Qadi Asad bin Furat. Close on the heels of this development ships laden with troops were sent from Constantinople. But, after fierce fighting the fresh reinforcing troops were fought back. Unfortunately an epidemic broke out among the Muslim troops, which proved more injurious than the Christian attacks. It took a heavy toll of Muslims lives. Because of this they raised their siege and decided to go back to

the occupied cities and regroup to comeback and conquer the Island. While they were moving back, they found the warships from Constantinople surrounding the area and the Christian forces proceeded to attack the retreating Muslim soldiers and surrounding them in their camps. Muhammad bin Abul Jawari died during the attack.

The Muslim troops immediately chose Zuhayr bin Auf as their commander. The Muslims were besieged for some time when by chance, a fleet of Muslim warships from Spain was sailing in quest of waging *Jihad* and happened to be in the Mediterranean Sea. When the besieged Muslims of Sicily found out about this, they contacted the fleet and brought to their attention the precarious state of the Islamic forces. Responding to the call for help three hundred boats were directly sent to the coast of Sicily. They landed on the coast and started fighting the Christians and forced them to raise their siege and flee. After their freedom, the Islamic forces resumed their conquests. The Spanish fleet after doing the needful took leave. The African Islamic forces besieged Palermo and set up their government over the occupied territories again and in the meantime, reinforcements from Africa in the form of military boats arrived.

The army that had come with Asad bin Furat numbered ten thousand and seven hundred in all, ten thousand infantry and seven hundred cavalry. Palermo had not been conquered when Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Aghlab, the cousin of Ziyadatullah arrived after becoming Governor of Sicily. Palermo was ruled by the Romans. The southern half of Sicily was under Muslim rule while the northern part was controlled by the Christians and they received constant help from the Caesar of Rome. However, the Muslim were continuously expanding their territories and after the conquest of Palermo, Sicily virtually became a province of the Aghlab rule and a Muslim Governor presided over it.

The greatest accomplishment of Ziyadatullah's rule was the inclusion of Sicily to the Islamic lands. Muslim rule continued on the island for almost three hundred years. Civil war among the Muslims caused it to be lost to the Christians and they wiped out all the Muslims from Sicily as they did in Spain.

## **His Death**

Ziyadatullah died in 223 A.H. and his brother Aghlab bin Ibrahim Aghlab succeeded him.

## **Aghlab bin Ibrahim Abu Iqal Aghlab**

He kept his subjects happy and any revolts were quickly dealt with. He died in 226 A.H., after a peaceful rule of two years and seven months. His son Abul Abbas bin Ibrahim bin Aghlab succeeded him.

## **Abul Abbas Muhammad**

Abul Abbas also ruled like his father. But Abu J'afar, the brother of Abu Abbas rose in revolt in 240 A.H., and deposed Abul Abbas and set up his own rule. Abul Abbas rebuilt his army and drove him out of Egypt and regained the throne in 242 A.H. Abul Abbas died and was succeeded by his son Abu Ibrahim Ahmad bin Abul Abbas.

## **Abu Ibrahim Muhammad**

After coming to the throne Abu Ibrahim brought about an increment in the salaries of his fighters built forts at various places. He also continued fighting with the Romans of Sicily.

In Shawwal, 247 A.H., the Muslims won a great victory over the Romans and a large number of captives were brought to Africa. They were sent to the Caliph Mutawakil in Baghdad from the Aghlab family despite having their own independent rule, they were attached to the Baghdad Caliphate's authority. Abu Ibrahim Ahmad died in 249 A.H. and was succeeded by his son Ziyadatullah who gained fame as Ziyadatullah the Younger.

## **Ziyadatullah**

Ziyadatullah's rule was similar to his elders but he did not rule for more than one year when his brother, Muhammad bin Abu Ibrahim entitled Abul Charaniq came to the throne.

### **Abul Gharanq**

Abul Gharanq came to the throne in 250 A.H. following the death of his brother, Ziyadatullah. He was fond of fun and sport. During his period the Romans conquered a part of Sicily. However, shortly after that the Muslim forces took it back from them. He built a number of forts along the border of Morocco and in the coastal areas. He died in 261 A.H. after ruling for eleven years and was succeeded by his brother Ibrahim bin Abu Ibrahim.

### **Ibrahim bin Ahmad**

Ibrahim bin Ahmad was a wise person. He began well and made his administration strong and stable and minimized the possibility of insurgence. Egyptian forces invaded Africa in 267 A.H. but Ibrahim's troops repelled the attack. An interval of insurgence broke out in 269 A.H. and took a heavy toll of Muslim lives before coming to an end. The Khawarij attack against the government in 280 A.H. took the entire country by storm. Ibrahim faced the disturbance with exemplary courage and determination and put down the uprisings by sending his troops to every corner of the country. Following this event he recruited Sudanese fighters for his forces and horsemen from the Sudanese slaves rose to thirty thousand. Ibrahim came to Tunis from Qairwan in 281 A.H., built a palace and settled there.

News came from Sicily in 287 A.H. that the people of Palermo had revolted. Ibrahim sent his son, Abul Abbas Abdullah at the head of a fleet consisting of one hundred and sixty warships. Abul Abbas reached Sicily and gave repeated reversals to the Christian insurgents and brought peace to the entire island. He then moved ahead with his boats and invaded the coastal areas of France and returned after a long campaign of one and half years. On his return, Ibrahim himself attacked the coastal areas of France and the French feared him much. He was still besieging some areas when he passed away in 289 A.H. and was buried in Palermo. During the rule of Ibrahim a Shi'ite named Abu Abdullah Husain bin Muhammad began to preach love for the *Ahl-e-Ba'it* (members of the Prophet's family) in Kutama city towards the south of Mount Atlas lying between Morocco and Africa. He gained



much popularity and strength and started putting pressure on the Aghlab rule after capturing Kutama. On the death of Ibrahim Aghlabi, his son Abul Abbas Abdullah came to the throne.

### **Abul Abbas**

Abul Abbas chose Tunis as his capital. He sent his son Abul Khul at the head of an army who massacred the followers of Abu Abdullah the Shi'ite. Abu Abdullah again built his army and launched an attack on Abu Khul. After a day and night encounter Abu Khul was defeated and came back to Tunis. He collected fighters again and proceeded to attack Abu Abdullah, the Shi'ite but the latter sniped at his army, which fled in disorder. He built his army once again and marched on Abu Abdullah's territories. Unfortunately, his brother, Ziyadatullah bin Abul Abbas hatched a conspiracy with the servants of his father and did away with Abul Abbas and came to the throne in Shaban, 290 A.H. On getting news of the event Abu Khul came back to Tunis but was arrested and killed. Ziyadatullah killed his other brothers and uncles too. His appellation was Abu Mudir.

### **Abu Mudir Ziyadatullah**

After Abu Mudir Ziyadatullah's accession to the throne Abu Abdullah, the Shi'ite captured Setif city and his power expanded greatly. Abu Mudir passed a life of luxury and lacked courage. He left Tunis and settled in Raqqadah, and sent his General, Ibrahim bin Habeesh to take on Abu Abdullah the Shi'ite, Ibrahim bin Habeesh marched with an army of forty thousand men and stayed in Ksar el-Kabir for six months. During this period, he collected fighters from far and near, which at last rose to one hundred thousand. He then advanced towards Kutama but was unexpectedly defeated and fled back to Qairwan.

Abu Abdullah conquered and killed the Governor, Fath bin Yahya. The victories won by Abu Abdullah stirred the people of Qairwan and other cities. Ziyadatullah spent money like water to restore peace and order and kept the recruiting process going but Abu Abdullah continued moving ahead, capturing one city after another until he conquered Qamudah.

## **End of Aghlabia Dynasty**

In the wake of the fall of the city of Qamudah Abu Mudir Ziyadatullah left Raqqadah by ship laden with goods and chattels and moved towards the east. He first wanted to land in Alexandria but the Governor did not allow his entry. He then landed on the Syrian coast and settled and died in Riqa. This virtually was the end of Aghlabia dynasty. Abu Abdullah, the Shi'ite then captured all the territories of the Aghlabia dynasty and took an oath of allegiance from the people for Ubaidullah Mahdi and this was the beginning of Ubaid (Fatimid) dynasty. It was the same year that Abu Ubaidullah, the Shi'ite captured Qairwan and Raqqadah and sent Hasan bin Khazir Katami as the Governor of Sicily. However, the people of Sicily put Hasan bin Khazir in captivity in 299 A.H because of his rudeness and evil disposition and requested Ubaidullah Mahdi to replace him with someone else.

## **Ubaiddullah Dynasty in Egypt and Tripoli**

### **Abu Abdullah**

With the beginning of Abbasid Caliphate, the Alwis (type of Shites) started antagonistic activities against the Abbasid administration. The Alwis tried repeatedly to disrupt the Islamic caliphate and each time they met with failure. Abdullah bin Saba, the Jew had sown the seeds of discord among the people and conspiracies against the central administration. Their nefarious plan was aided and abetted by the Magians, Jews, and Berbers who carried out their activities in the garb of new Muslims. When the Abbasid dynasty showed signs of weakness, some Jews and Magians tried to present themselves as Alwis to benefit from the situation of their increased power. Since Berber territories were far from Baghdad, the center of the ruling power, they took advantage of this situation. A person named Muhammad Habib who lived in Salmia near Homs, Syria towards the end of the third century Hijra came on the scene claiming descent from Imam J'afar Sadiq's elder son Isma'il. He tried to take advantage of his relation

with the Imam. Imam J'afar Sadiq's influence had spread throughout Yemen, Africa and Morocco. He used all his means, devices and force to get the people ready to expect the arrival of Imam Mahdi in the immediate future and indoctrinated them with the idea that he would be from among the Alwi Fatimid. Habib sent one of his confidants Rustam bin Hasan bin Hoshab to Yemen to convince the people there of the arrival of Imam Mahdi in the near future and he performed his duty with the utmost care and tact.

Following this a man named Abu Abdullah Hasan bin Muhammad bin Zakariya, a Shi'ite by faith, and a staunch supporter of the Alwis came to Habib. Habib found him promising and sent him, after the necessary instructions, to be in the company of Rustam bin Hasan for a short time and learn from him the art of preaching and then to go to the Berber territories to perform his duty. Muhammad Habib also told Abu Abdullah that his son, Ubaidullah was Imam Mahdi and that he was being sent as one of those inviting people to him. Abu Abdullah arrived in Yemen, took lessons in preaching and reached Makkah in the Hajj season. He came close to the wealthy and powerful people of Kutama, from North Africa, who were in Makkah for Hajj and accompanied them to Kutama when the Hajj was over. He plunged himself into preaching and influenced a large section by exhibiting his piety and dedication to the prayers. Abu Abdullah, the Shi'ite came to Kutama on 15 Rabia al-Awwal 288 A.H. and began to convince the people of the advent of Imam Mahdi without experiencing any difficulty. The people of Kutama built a house for Abu Abdullah and he set up his preaching center there. He was able to convince the people around him that the place where Imam Mahdi would appear was to be Kutama and he was very sure that Kutama was the place that the Imam would appear. They were told by him that they should keep ready and be alert to welcome, follow and support him.

When Ibrahim bin Ahmad bin Aghlab, the ruler of Africa, came to know of these activities of Abu Abdullah, he ordered him to stop it otherwise he would be punished. By this time, the entire area of Kutama and the surrounding tribes had accepted the doctrine preached by Abu Abdullah. Finding himself strong enough Abu Abdullah showed disrespect to the envoy of the ruler and sent him

back with rude and harsh words. The people of Kutama on reflection feared punishment from the ruler and decided to save the situation by turning Abu Abdullah out of Kutama and sent him to Ibrahim bin Ahmad, the ruler of North Africa. However, the religious leaders opposed this proposal and united to help him. With their efforts Harun Ghassani, the Governor of the province invited him to Touggourt. The people of Kutama also reversed their stand and extended their strong support to Abu Abdullah and his power and influence increased to a great extent. With all the help and support and favorable circumstances Abu Abdullah gathered so much strength that he became the ruler of the western part of the country and it all happened within a short period of one and half years.

When Ibrahim Aghlabi's son Abul Abbas Abdullah bin Ibrahim came to throne, he sent his son, Abu Khul to take on Abu Abdullah. At first Abu Abdullah lost the battle to Abu Khul but later Abu Khul was killed and Abu Abdullah's problem was solved. When Ziyadatullah, the last ruler of the Aghlabi dynasty came to power, Abu Abdullah had ample opportunities to expand his area of influence. He then began to preach with full force that the advent of Imam Mahdi was at hand. Messengers of Abu Abdullah came to him and informed him that his rule had already been established in the western territory and Ubaidullah, then known as Ubaidullah al-Mahdi was requested to take over the administration of these territories. Ubaidullah was accompanied there by the people of Salmia and his son, Abul Qasim and a slave went with him. They proceeded in the guise of a trade caravan and chose a zigzag path instead of straight one. Spies informed the Abbasid Caliph Muktafi that such and such person had left from Salmia to the western territories. Muktafi issued orders to Governor of Egypt, Isa Nawishtri, to arrest the man of such and such features on his way to the western territories via Egypt. The Governor rounded up the caravan but later left Ubaidullah go due to a lack of positive identification. Ubaidullah reached Tripoli and sent word to Abu Abdullah in Kutama of his arrival. The Governor of North Africa, Ziyadatullah Aghlabi, stood in the way of their meeting. The Governor had already been informed that Ubaidullah was heading towards Abu Abdullah, following this alert he posted his men at several places to catch him. The person who had been informed of

Ubaidullah's arrival was Abu Abdullah's brother, Abul Abbas, who was sent along with his men to escort Ubaidullah. Abul Abbas was arrested in Qairwan and Ziyadatullah put him to prison. When Ubaidullah came to know of the arrest of Abul Abbas, he fled to Ksar el-Kabir and then to Sijilmassa where al-Yasa the servant of the Governor, Ziyadatullah Aghlabi, took him to be a tradesman and treated him honorably. When the Governor issued orders to arrest Ubaidullah he was captured by al-Yasa. Abul Abbas and Ubaidullah Mahdi suffered the bitterness of captivity for three or four years in Qairwan and Sijilmassa respectively. During this period Abu Abdullah, the Shi'ite kept conquering territories. By 296 A.H., he collected a huge army of two hundred thousand and took his brother, Abul Abbas, out of the prison after conquering Qairwan in 296 A.H. He then appointed Abul Abbas as Governor of Qairwan and proceeded to Sijilmassa. Various tribes on the way showed their loyalty to him and when he reached near Sijilmassa, he wrote a very soft letter to al-Yasa bin Madra'a seeking peace. When the envoy of Abu Abdullah met al-Yasa, he killed the envoy, tore up the letter and came out to fight with Abu Abdullah. Following a fierce encounter al-Yasa's troops fled to safety and al-Yasa and his men followed suit. Following his conquest Abu Abdullah stormed into the city went straight to the prison and freed Ubaidullah Mahdi along with his son, Abul Qasim. He then had Ubaidullah Mahdi and his son Abul Qasim mounted on horseback and followed Ubaidullah shedding tears of joy and saying: "This is your master. This is your master." He escorted him to camp, had him seated on his throne, took *ba'it* and made the others follow him. Al-Yasa was brought in chains and was ordered to be put to death.

### **Ubaidullah Mahdi**

Abu Abdullah and Ubaidullah set out towards the west after passing forty days in Sijilmassa and Qairwan. Abu Abdullah presented all his possessions to Ubaidullah. *Ba'it* of Caliphate for Ubaidullah Mahdi was administered. His name came to be mentioned in the Friday address and preachers were sent to the Berber territories to teach them the new doctrine. All the people were forced to accept their faith. The people of Kutama had been supporting Abu Abdullah and so gained

the upper hand in the army and the administration. Abu Abdullah and his brother, Abul Abbas were active in governmental affairs. It was Abu Abdullah who had brought such a great empire into existence. He was instrumental behind uprooting the Aghlabi dynasty and called Ubaiddullah to take charge of the administration.

After coming to the throne and finding himself a sovereign ruler, Ubaiddullah wanted to wipe out the influence of Abu Abdullah and his brother, Abul Abbas. At this point Abu Abdullah's eyes opened. The people of Kutama had more faith in Abu Abdullah and they had accepted Ubaiddullah as Imam Mahdi with the efforts of Abu Abdullah. Abu Abdullah began to convince the people secretly that the identification of Ubaiddullah as Imam Mahdi was his mistake, and that he was certainly not the Imam, the Innocent. He was, in fact, a usurper and a man-eater. The real Imam Mahdi was yet to come. Most of the people of Kutama sided with him and when Ubaiddullah came to know of this, he began to kill the people hatching the conspiracy against him. With the mutual consultations of Abu Abdullah and the people of Kutama, Sheikh al-Mashaikh the leading religious leader of Kutama, a very pious and noble person of the city, was sent to Ubaiddullah Mahdi. He went and asked him to show any sign of his being Imam Mahdi. Ubaiddullah foresaw the lurking danger and he signaled his slave and Sheikh al-Mashaikh was beheaded. The people of Kutama were violently engaged and wanted to kill Ubaiddullah.

### **Abu Abdullah Assassinated**

In view of the deteriorating situation Ubaiddullah invited two of the most influential chiefs of Kutama named Aruba bin Yusuf and his brother, Habasa bin Yusuf to his special place of retreat and talked to them very sincerely and affectionately. Later, he asked them to kill Abu Abdullah and his brother Abul Abbas. His order was duly implemented and both the targets were attacked and done away with. This event took place in 298 A.H.

### **Revolts**

In the wake of this event the supporters of Abu Abdullah revolted against Ubaiddullah who faced the situation and put down the

insurgence. After a short time, the people of Kutama rose up against Ubaidullah and he once again put it down with a heavy hand. Since the atmosphere of the country was deteriorating, Ubaidullah stopped preaching the Shi'ite creed. Following this Ubaidullah Mahdi gave Bajah to Aruba bin Yusuf, Barqah (Cyrenaica) to Habasa bin Yusuf and appointed his son Abul Qasim as his crown prince. After a few days, the people of Kutama appointed a youth as their chief and declared him Imam Mahdi and very violently revolted against Ubaidullah. They also declared this youth a Prophet. Ubaidullah sent his son Abul Qasim at the head of a huge army to punish the people of Kutama. Abul Qasim defeated the people of Kutama and ravaged Kutama and the young Mahdi was also captured and killed. The people of Tripoli revolted in 300 A.H. Abul Qasim was sent to face the uprisings and he conquered Tripoli after a long siege.

Abul Qasim led a strong navy and invaded Egypt and Alexandria in 301 A.H. Habasa bin Yusuf also accompanied the navy. Alexandria was conquered. When Caliph Muqtadir Abbasi of Baghdad received the news he dispatched an army under the command of Sabugtagin and Munis, his slave. They were able to force Abul Qasim and Habasa out from the borders of Egypt. The Ubaidite forces returned to Qairwan. Habasa once again launched an attack on Alexandria in 302 A.H. but Munis, the slave forced him to flee after a few encounters. Seven thousand of Habasa's troops lost their lives and Habasa escaped miraculously. Ubaidullah Mahdi killed Habasa the same year. Following the killing of Habasa his brother Aruba revolted against rule of Ubaidullah. The people of Kutama lent their support to Aruba. Ubaidullah chose his slave, Ghalib to punish Aruba. He assaulted Aruba with a huge army and defeated and killed him along with his cousins and comrades. Soon after that Sicily revolted and drove out the Governor, Ali bin Amr from the territory. They then sent word to Caliph Muqtadir Abbasi showing their loyalty to him. Ubaidullah sent Hasan bin Khazir at the head of a war fleet to punish the people of Sicily. Ahmad bin Qahrab defeated and killed Hasan bin Khazir after a fierce encounter. The people of Sicily feared punishment from Ubaidullah so they caught Ahmad bin Qahrab and sent him to Ubaidullah and sought his forgiveness. Ubaidullah killed Ahmad and appointed Ali bin Musa bin Ahmad as the Governor of Sicily.



## **The Founding of Mahdiya City**

Since Ubaidullah Mahdi was an Isma'ili Shi'ite and one who claimed to be Imam Mahdi, he was in constant fear of uprisings against him, particularly when the whole North Africa did not accept his claim. He planned to found a new city for his capital. He visited the coastal areas and chose a narrow rocky peninsula on Cape Ifriqiya and laid the foundation of a city. He named it Mahdiya. The city was strengthened with strong fortifications and iron doors. When the work was completed, Ubaidullah Mahdi said laughingly, "I have today, won peace for Bani Fatima. They are now safe". The same year he set up a boat factory, which built nine hundred boats for his fleet in the first year. He then sent his son, Abul Qasim to invade Alexandria in 307 A.H. Abul Qasim conquered Alexandria and captured the Nile Delta. After receiving this news Caliph Muqtadir of Baghdad sent his slave, Munis, to Egypt. After a number of encounters and trials of strength Munis was victorious. Ubaidullah had sent a fleet of eighty war ships to reinforced Abul Qasim but he had been defeated and forced to flee before the reinforcements arrived. The fleet was unaware of the defeat of Abul Qasim and they continued moving ahead. The fleet met its doom when Munis smashed it, set the boats on fire and killed them all.

The next year 308 A.H. Ubaidullah Mahdi sent Mudala bin Habus to invade Morocco. He came into conflict with Yahya bin Idris bin Amr more than once. Finally, Yahya became subordinate to Ubaidullah Mahdi, and Ubaidullah appointed Musa bin Abi al-Afiya Maknasi as the caretaker of the Moroccan provinces. In 309 A.H., other provinces of Morocco were also annexed under the Ubaidite rule. Fez was then under the rule of Yahya. The same year Musa bin Abi al-Afiya lodged a complaint against Yahya and by the order of Ubaidullah Yahya's part of the territory was also annexed to Ubaidite rule. When the Idrisite rule was no longer in effect, some individuals of the dynasty shifted to Rif (Northeastern Morocco) and Ghumarah (Northwestern Morocco) and established their governments there. After dealing with Morocco Mudala invaded Sijilmassa and handed it over to his cousin by killing family members of the Madrar Maknasi tribes, who were antagonistic to the Ubaidites. Mudala was a great commander who

had played a pivotal role in setting up Ubaidullah Mahdi's rule in Morocco. However, his expansionist policy, violence and bloodshed made the Berbers rise up against him. A number of encounters took place and Mudala was finally killed. With his assassination Morocco was overtaken by revolt and it went out of the control of the Ubaidites.

Ubaidullah sent his son, Abul Qasim to Morocco in 215 A.H. When Muhammad bin Khazar, the chief of the Zanata tribes realized Abul Qasim was moving towards him he changed his way and turned to the southern deserts. Abul Qasim proceeded towards the west conquering city after city. He besieged Hasan bin Abi al-Atish in Jerada city (Northeastern Morocco). The siege dragged on and Abul Qasim had to return without any gains. On the way back, he arrested Banu Kamlan, the ruler of the city of Masila and banished him to Qairwan. He then reconstructed Masila, named it Mohammedia and entrusted it to Ali bin Hamdan along with Zab city. He gave the general rule and vigilance to Musa bin Abi al-Afiya but, very shortly, he rose against Ubaidullah Mahdi and accepted the leadership of the Umayyad dynasty of Spain and the name of the Caliph of Spain formed part of all official addresses all over Morocco.

Hearing this Ubaidullah sent Ahmad Maknasi to Morocco at the head of a strong army. After a number of encounters Musa bin Abi al-Afiya moved towards Spain and Ahmad Maknasi went towards Mahdiya after ravaging Morocco.

## **Death of Ubaidullah**

Ubaidullah Mahdi died in Rabia al-Awwal, 322 A.H. after completing twenty-four years on the throne. He was succeeded by his son Abul Qasim Muhammad Mahdi under the title "Qaim Bi Amrillah". He is also known as Abul Qasim Nazar.

## **Abul Qasim Nazar**

On coming to the throne he first put down the uprisings that had broken out in the wake of Ubaidullah's demise. He then turned to Morocco. It was again taken over by Musa bin al-Afiya. By 324 A.H., the whole of Morocco except Fez once again came under the rule of Abul Qasim. Following this Abul Qasim sent a General named Ibn

Ishaq at the head of a massive navy to conquer the northern coastal line, Ibn Ishaq conquered the whole territory up to Genoa followed by the island of Sardinia. Ibn Ishaq then sent his slave, Ziran to Egypt with an army that captured Alexandria. After these events Abul Qasim became involved with the disturbances created by a man named Abu Yazid and continued to be occupied with this.

### **Skirmishes with Abu Yazid**

Abu Yazid Mukhallad bin Kirad belonged to Qastila and would frequently visit Sudan as a part of his trading activities. His son, Abu Yazid was born and brought up in Sudan. The Sudanese were inclined to Kharji creed and opposed the Shi'ite sect. Yazid was also influenced by their religious thoughts. He then came to Nahert and took to teaching. It was the period when Abu Abdullah, the Shi'ite had commenced his preaching work among the Berbers. Abu Yazid continued preaching his thoughts and creed among the people and watched Abu Abdullah's activities silently. Both Abu Abdullah and Ubaidullah were aware of the preaching efforts of the teacher but important administrative affairs and military activities did not give them an opportunity to uproot Abu Yazid's antagonistic ideas. When Ubaidullah Mahdi died and the country was overtaken by disturbances, Abu Yazid started preaching with force and determination and gave himself the title Sheikh al-Muminin. People in large numbers started coming and joining him as disciples. He was able to build a strong army out of his disciples. When the ruler of Bejaia came to know of Abu Yazid's war preparations, he attacked Abu Yazid but was defeated. Abu Yazid moved ahead and besieged Bejaia, which lingered on for a long time and he left in disappointment. Berber tribes lent their support to him and he ordered them to mention the name of Musa bin Nusayr, the Caliph of Spain in addresses from the pulpit. With the help and support of the Zanata tribes Abu Yazid gradually rose to power and city after city went out of Abul Qasim's control. Even though Abul Qasim sent seasoned Generals and Commanders, each one was defeated. Abu Yazid's army captured Qairwan and Abul Qasim was forced to take shelter in his fort. Abu Yazid then spread his troops all over Tripoli and bloodshed and plunder broke out. Abul Qasim wrote to some governors still free

from the sway of Abu Yazid. The people of Kutama came to his help. However, the people of Kutama fled the battlefield when the other forces, which took the field on behalf of Abul Qasim, were beaten. After that Abu Yazid led his troops up to the fortifications of Mahdiya city but failed to make progress there. At last, Abu Yazid moved back to Qairwan and Abul Qasim's troops began to snipe at his retreating army.

### **Death of Abul Qasim**

Abu Yazid's son Ayub invaded Mahdiya and besieged it in 324 A.H. During this siege, Abul Qasim died in Mahdiya. Abu Yazid was then laying siege around Susah city.

### **Isma'il bin Abul Qasim**

Isma'il bin Abul Qasim succeeded his father and entitled himself Al-Mansur. Isma'il raised the siege of Ayub bin Abu Yazid and sent a contingent to reinforce the army in Susah. Abu Yazid made an all out effort to obstruct the launching of the enemy fleet but met with failure. The reinforcing troops landed on the coast and took the battlefield against Abu Yazid with the active support of the people of Susah. Abu Yazid was beaten and his military camp was plundered. He moved to Qairwan in distress because of his defeat, the people of Qairwan turned out his Governor from Qairwan and stopped Abu Yazid from coming into the city. At the same time they declared their loyalty to Abul Qasim. Abu Yazid then moved to Sabha. Following this Isma'il bin Abul Qasim came to Qairwan and consoled the citizens. Abu Yazid invaded Qairwan with a massive army in 334 A.H. Ismail faced the invasion but conceded defeat after a number of encounters. However, he rebuilt his army in a very short time by collecting his scattered fighters and defeated Abu Yazid after a fierce attack. Abu Yazid moved to Bejaia, defeated and disappointed and the people closed the door of the city on him. At last, Abu Yazid besieged the city.

Hearing this Isma'il bin Abul Qasim led his army to Bejaia. When Abu Yazid heard of Ismail's arrival, he left Bejaia and besieged another fort. He was unsuccessful for Isma'il also went there as well to support that fort. Abu Yazid continued to wander from here to there and at last Abu Yazid and Isma'il came face to face near the mountain

of Kutama. Abu Yazid was injured and escaped leaving ten thousand fighters killed and wounded. Although Abu Yazid plunged himself into the task of collecting troops once again, his Governors and allied tribes joined the camp of Isma'il bin Abul Qasim by seeking his forgiveness. In that way all the territory, which until then was ruled by Abu Yazid, came under the control of Isma'il Abul Qasim bin Ubaiddullah.

### **Abu Yazid's Arrest and Death**

When Abu Yazid was captured from Fort Kutama he was badly injured and died of his wounds before long. Isma'il then went to Qairwan. Shortly after that he was informed that the Governor of the western territory, Hameed bin Baslin, had revolted against the Ubaidite dynasty and submitted himself to Umayyad dynasty of Spain. Ismail led his army to punish the rebel Governor and they faced one another at Tiaret. Hameed was beaten and about the same time Fadl bin Abu Yazid, besieged Bejaia. Isma'il turned to punish him but before the occurrence of an event someone beheaded Fadl and sent it to Ismail. After attaining peace for a short period he deposed Khalil bin Ishaq from Sicily and replaced him with Husain bin Ali bin Abul Husain.

### **Death of Isma'il**

In 340 A.H. Isma'il built a massive war fleet and asked Husain bin Ali bin Abul Husain, the Governor of Sicily to be ready to join the fleet. The southern part of Italy was conquered and the victorious army returned to Qairwan and Mahdiya rich with spoils of war in 341 A.H. but Isma'il had already died.

### **Muiz bin Isma'il**

His son, Muiz, succeeded Isma'il. The first year of his coming to the throne some Berber tribes expressed their loyalty to him. In 344 A.H., he sent word to Husain bin Ali bin Abul Husain, Governor of Sicily to invade Murcia, on the coast of Spain. Husain carried out the orders and returned with booty and prisoners. As a retaliatory action, Nasir ad-Dinullah of Spain ordered his slave, Ghalib to lead a fleet to invade the coast of Africa. But Muiz's forces were ready to face them and

Ghalib had to return without attaining any success. However, the Spanish fleet successfully invaded the coast of Africa in 347 A.H. and returned with a large number of captives and huge amount of valuables as booty after completely ravaging the coastal areas and cities.

Following this Muiz turned to building up his military power, regularizing the administrative machinery of the country and expanding his territories. The persons mentioned below governed the following provinces:

Province	Person
Ifkan and Tiaret (Northwestern Algeria)	Yala bin Muhammad
Ashir (North Central Algeria)	Ziri bin Manad Sanhaji
Masila (North Central Algeria)	J'afar bin Ali, the Spanish
Bejaia (Northeastern Algeria)	Caesar of Sicily
Fez (North Central Morocco)	Ahmad bin Bakr bin Abi Sahl
Sijilmassa (Southeastern Morocco)	Muhammad bin Wasal Maknasi

During the last days of 347 A.H., Muiz got the news that Yala bin Muhammad was plotting against his rule. He sent his scribe, Johar of Sicily to punish Yala with the help of J'afar bin Ali and Ziri bin Manad, the Governors of Masila and Ashir respectively. Yala bin Muhammad also accepted the challenge. The Governors of Fez and Sijilmassa also rose up in revolt. After fierce fighting and bloodshed, Yali was arrested in 348 A.H. and Fez and Sijilmassa also fell. Ahmad bin Bakr and Muhammad bin Wasal were also caught and brought to Qairwan.

During the Abbassid rule one of the banished groups from Spain landed on the banks of Egypt and captured Alexandria during the governorship of Abdullah bin Tahir. He surrounded them and promised peace and safety on the sole condition of their departure from Egypt. The banished Spanish group left Alexandria and captured Carat Island and accepted Abu Hafs Bluti as their King. The Christian navy attacked the Island with a fleet of seven hundred warships. After a heavy toll of Muslim lives, the island fell to the Christians. The Caesar of Constantinople and Muiz's navy clashed in 354 A.H., which ended in the defeat of the Christians. Muslim forces

marched ahead captured a number of cities and forced the Caesar of Constantinople to pay the *Jizyah* (poll tax) and tribute. A short time after this event Muiz came to know that, following the demise of Kafur Akhashedi, the Governor of Egypt, disorder and disruption had spread all over Egypt.

## Conquest of Egypt

Muiz gave his minister and scribe, Johar a huge army in 355 A.H. and ordered him to march to Egypt, he proceeded gradually regularizing the administrative affairs. Akhashedi's troops could not withstand the assault; with the result that Johar stormed into Egypt on 15 Shaban 359 A.H. and delivered an address in the name of Muiz from the Grand Mosque of Egypt. In Jumad al-Awwal 359 A.H. Johar offered his prayer in Grand mosque of Ibn Tulun and ordered them to add, "*Hayya ala Khair il amal.*"

This was the first *adhan*, which was pronounced in Egypt with this addition. After capturing the entire country of Mahdia Johar arrested all the relatives of the Akhashedi family and sent them to Muiz in Egypt. He then sent his General J'afar bin Falah Katami to Palestine and Syria at the head of an army. He captured Damascus in 360 A.H. It added to the joy of Muiz who then resolved to make Cairo his capital. He then appointed Balkin bin Ziri bin Manad as viceroy of the western territories and asked him to reside in Qairwan and conferred on him the title of Abul Futuh. In Shawwal 361 A.H. he left his capital Mahdiya and stayed near Qairwan.

## Transfer of the Capital to Cairo

Shortly after the departure of Muiz from Mahdiya all his treasures, possessions and belongings were sent to Egypt along with the troops. Balkin bin Ziri escorted him for a stage or two. Balkin was then dispatched to Qairwan and Muiz himself set out towards Barqah and arrived at Alexandria in Shaban 362 A.H. The citizens came out to greet and lead him honorably into the city. He reached Cairo on Ramadan 5, 363 A.H. The journey from Qairwan to Cairo took about one year. Before this Bani Tabghaj ruled over Damascus and they paid tribute to the Qaramatians. When J'afar bin Falah captured Damascus,

he refuse to pay tribute to the Qaramatians. The King of the Qaramatians, A'sim, attacked Damascus. J'afar fought the Qaramatians back. They launched a massive attack on Damascus once again in 361 A.H. Although J'afar faced the assault gallantly, he was killed on the battlefield and Damascus fell to the Qaramatians. Their next target was Ramla. After capturing Ramla, they started preparing for the invasion of Egypt. Muiz came to know all this during his journey. When he arrived in Cairo, he was informed that the Qaramatians had besieged Jaffa and their forces were concentrating on the borders of Egypt.

### Encounters with the Qaramatians

Shortly after reaching Egypt Muiz wrote a long letter to A'sim, the King of the Qaramatians detailing the submission and subordination of his elders to those of his own and to banish from his mind all thought of fighting. He wrote back:

"Your letter reached me. It is poor in content and lavish in words. We are about to attack you".

A'sim dispatched the letter to Egypt and ordered his troops to get ready for battle. He then led the army himself and entered the borders of Egypt halting at Shams. Hassan bin Jarrah Tai, the Chief of Arabia joined A'sim with a large group from Tai. A'sim and Hassan held talks and then spread small fighting groups to ravage the towns and villages of Egypt. The entire territory was engulfed by blood and fire. Muiz grew afraid of the massive fighting forces of the Qaramatians. The Qaramatians made no delay in attacking Cairo. In view of the advances of the Qaramatians Muiz wrote a letter to Hassan bin Jarrah and promised to give him one hundred thousand dinars if he would desert A'sim's forces on the battlefield and leave the field along with his own troops. Hassan bin Jarrah agreed to take the bribe and complete the treachery. Thus, according to the agreement as Muiz came out and attacked the Qaramatian army Hassan and his troops left the field. A'sim and his fighters lost their nerve. Although they kept fighting, they lost the battle at last. About one thousand five hundred Qaramatians were taken as prisoners of war. Muiz sent his commander, Abu Muhammad at the back of the fugitives and he drove them out of Egyptian territory.



## **Conquest of Damascus**

After this conquest Muiz killed all the Qaramatians prisoners' of war. He then sent Zalim bin Mawhub Aqili as the Governor of Damascus. Zalim reached Damascus, arrested the Qaramatian Governor and sent him to Egypt where he was put in prison. In 362 A.H., the Ubaidite flag was unfurled over Damascus. The same year, the people of Makkah and Madinah accepted Muiz's rule under compulsion and the Friday addresses were delivered there in his name. The people of Damascus were not happy with the Ubaidite rule. In the beginning of 365 A.H., Uftagin, who was among the servants of Izz ud-Daula bin Boya, captured Damascus and turned out Muiz's Governor from there. The people of Damascus were happy with his arrival. When Muiz came to know of this event, he wrote a letter to Uftagin requesting him to keep ruling over Damascus and that he would shortly issue him a letter authorizing him to rule. The one condition was that he should deliver the Friday addresses in Muiz's name and sever his relations with the Caliph of Baghdad. But Uftagin turned down the proposal and kept delivering the addresses in the name of the Caliph of Baghdad. Muiz became angry and marched on Damascus at the head of a strong army.

## **Death of Muiz and Succession of Aziz**

Muiz reached Babbis when he received the message of his death on 15 Rabia al-Awwal 365 A.H. He had to bid farewell after reigning for 23 years. He was the first Ubaidite King who succeeded in conquering Egypt. His son, Nazar under the title, "Aziz Billah", succeeded him. Nazar kept the death of his father a secret for a few months. On Eid al-Adha 365 A.H. he announced his father's death and formally came to the throne.

## **Aziz bin Ubaidi**

### **Invasion of Uftagin**

Having heard of the death of Muiz, Uftagin invaded Egypt and besieged Sadia. Zalim bin Mawhub and other Ubaidite chiefs came

out to fight but fled back after being beaten. Uftagin moved ahead and captured Rakka followed by Tabariya. After that he returned to Damascus. Aziz bin Muiz sent his scribe, Johar at the head of a strong army to take on Uftagin and conquer Damascus. Johar besieged Damascus and fighting between the two forces continued for a long time. Being tired of the siege Uftagin wrote to the Qaramatian King A'sim for help. With the receipt of the letter A'sim marched towards Damascus at the head of a strong army. With the news of his arrival Johar raised the siege of Damascus and left the place. Uftagin and A'sim chased Johar jointly. He first went to Ramla and then to Asqalan. When Johar was surrounded at Asqalan, he requested Uftagin to let him go to Egypt and he would have his King, Aziz bin Muiz, send goods in return for the obligation. Even though A'sim advised Uftagin to decline the offer Uftagin did not listen to him and let Johar go. Johar went straight to Aziz and advised him of the impending danger. Aziz reacted very sharply and marched to invade putting Johar in charge of the vanguard.

### **Arrest of Uftagin and His Ministry**

In 367 A.H. Aziz besieged Ramla and sent words to Uftagin to join him by severing ties with A'sim on condition that he would be appointed the commander-in-chief of his army and given the rule of the part of the country he would choose to possess. Uftagin rejected the offer and launched an attack instead. Aziz was about to be defeated when he took to the battlefield firmly and fought back the joint forces of A'sim and Uftagin. Twenty thousand of their fighters fell dead. After winning victory Aziz announced a reward of one hundred thousand dinars for the one who would bring Uftagin to him alive. Someone captured Uftagin deceptively and received his reward. Aziz held Uftagin in high esteem and appointed him as his Prime Minister. He also sent his messenger to A'sim and asked him to meet him. On his refusal Aziz sent ten thousand dinars with the promise that he would be getting the same amount annually. However, A'sim declined the offer and left Tabariya for Ahsa. Aziz went to Cairo along with Uftagin. The former Prime Minister, Yaqub bin Maksi grew jealous of Uftagin and poisoned him to death. Aziz arrested him and put him in prison for forty days and ordered him to pay five hundred

thousand dinars as a penalty. After that Yaqub was again given the post of the Prime Minister.

When Uftagin was chasing Johar, he had put a man named Qassam in Damascus as his substitute. However, Uftagin never had an opportunity to get back to Damascus since that time. Qassam in the mean time had consolidated his position there. When Qassam heard of the departure of Uftagin to Egypt, he commenced delivering addresses in the name of Aziz. When Aziz sent Abu Muhammad bin Ibrahim as the Governor of Damascus, Qassam blocked his entry to the territory. Aziz sent reinforcements to punish Qassam. Bakchur, the servant of Saif ud-Daula, who was the ruler of Hims, sent supplies to the Egyptian ruler. Mufrij bin Jarrah, the chief of Arabian tribes also rose to fight. After a series of encounters Aziz appointed Bakchur as the Governor of Damascus. Bakchur turned out the supporters of Yaqub bin Maksi, the Prime Minister of Egypt from Damascus for he had opposed the appointment of Bakchur as the Governor of Damascus. Shortly after that Yaqub turned Aziz against Bakchur. An army was sent from Egypt to dislodge Bakchur who fought with the Egyptian troops but was defeated. Saif ud-Daula invaded Syria and the King of Constantinople, launched an assault on his own. In short, Damascus remained in the grip of large-scale fighting and bloodshed until 385 A. H.

### **Death of Aziz**

On receiving the news of the movement of the Roman forces towards Damascus Aziz himself led an army to Damascus and proclaimed *jihad* against the Romans. However, he fell ill at Balbis. It is strange that his father too had fallen ill at this very same place and died there. In short, Aziz also succumbed to his illness at the end of Ramadan 386 A.H. and his son Abu Mansur came to the throne.

### **Mansur Hakam bin Aziz Ubaldi**

Mansur entrusted the administration to Hasan bin Ammar Katami. After wielding power in the country the Katamis put the population to great trouble. Some members of the Dailmi family of the east had, being Shi'ite, shifted to Egypt to lend active support to the Ubaidite rule. Moreover, they added to the numbers of the easterners who had

already been counted as a force in Egypt. Because of this, a serious conflict broke out between the Eastern and Western sections, which led to civil war of the worst nature. Damascus and Hijaz also showed signs of revolt, in such a state of confusion and disorder Damascus was ruled over sometimes by the Arabs and at times by Turkish slaves and Egyptian chiefs.

### **Rebellion of Waleed bin Hisham and His Assassination**

In the meantime Waleed bin Hisham, known as Arkoh made a bid for power. When after gaining power in Spain, Mansur bin Abi Amir started killing and arresting the princes of Banu Umayyad, Waleed, the son of the last Caliph of the Banu Umayyad of Spain, fled for his life and first reached Qairwan and then to Syria via Yemen and Makkah. Syria was at that time passing through a state of chaos and disorder so he went to Egypt. He gained acceptance at Barqah. At first Hakim Ubaidi paid no attention to his movement. However, the people were unhappy with the reign of Hakim Ubaidi and tribe after tribe clustered round Waleed bin Hisham. Gaining strength and manpower he captured Barqah and invaded Egypt. Now the eyes of Hakim Ubaidi opened. He sent an army to eliminate the threat in its beginning but they met with defeat. The exercise was repeated several times. The entire territory of Egypt and Tripoli was about to fall when Hakim Ubaidi tried another strategy and played a trick and drew some of the Generals of Waleed to his side by the power of his purse. They led Waleed to be arrested treacherously. Hakim Ubaidi had him killed and this was the end of these disruptive activities. In order to bring the people round to his line of thinking he proclaimed liberty for the people to either confess Sunni or Shi'ite faith or pronounce "hayya ala khair al-amal" or not.

### **Hakim's Death**

Hakim Ubaidi believed in the influence of the stars on human life and was greatly inclined to astronomy and astrology. He had built a house on mount Maqtam adjacent to Cairo. He used to go there alone to imbibe the spiritual power of the stars and perform other religious rituals. On 17 Shawwal 411 A.H. he went as usual alone to mount

Maqtam riding on his donkey. His officials and courtiers waited for him for a couple of days and when he did not return, they moved ahead in search of Hakim. After covering some distance the donkey was found dead and then they found Hakim's garments covered with bloodstains. However, his dead body was never found. As per one narration, Hakim's sister had illicit relations with some men and when it came to the knowledge of Hakim he reproached her violently. Then she hatched a conspiracy with some of the Katami chiefs to kill him, because of his blasphemous beliefs and spiritual practices. Confirming Hakim's death the courtiers brought to the throne his minor son, Ali bin Hakim. *Zahir Li-Din Allah* was his appellation and his father's sister was made the caretaker of the administration.

### **Zahir bin Hakim Ubaldi**

Zahir's paternal aunt died and he had to run his Government with the help of the nobles and courtiers. Saleh bin Mirdas captured Syria and Damascus in 420 A.H. and dislodged the Ubaidite rule. Zahir ordered Zariri, the Governor of Palestine to launch an attack and he restored Damascus and Palestine, but Syria remained constantly dominated by fighting and revolts.

### **His Death**

Zahir died in 427 A.H. His son Abu Tamim M'ad with the appellation of Mustansir succeeded him. Abul Qasim Ali bin Ahmad was his Prime Minister. After Mustansir's accession to throne Abul Qasim took over the running of the Government.

### **Mustansir bin Zahir Ubaldi**

During the reign of Mustansir Arab tribes captured Syria and Damascus in 433 A.H. and the country went out of the control of the Ubaidites. Muiz bin Baris raised the banner of revolt in Tripoli and began to deliver addresses in the name of the Caliph of Baghdad. Meanwhile Mustansir deposed his Minister, Abul Qasim and replaced him with Husain bin Ali Tazwari. He then dispatched an Arab army towards Tripoli. It halted at Barqah and did not attack Tripoli. In view of this Mustansir started buying slaves to counter the Arabs and the

number of these slaves rose to twenty-three thousands. The Arab tribes now fighting for themselves marched ahead and set up their rule at various places including Tripoli and Atij. The Arab tribe Banu Adiy stormed the whole of Africa. Later these Arab chiefs sent their emissaries to Muiz bin Baris, who received them with warmth and honor, for he hoped they would abandon their life of plunder but they belied his hope and finally Muiz decided to punish the Arab tribes with the help of twenty thousand Berber tribesmen. Although the Arab tribes numbered only three thousand in all, the result of the fierce fighting went against Muiz. Muiz bin Baris fled and took refuge in Qairwan. Muiz collected his Berber fighters once again and attacked the Arabs on Eid al-Adha 10 Dhul Hijjah 446 A.H. but was again defeated. His third attack also ended in failure. The Arabs then chased him out of Qairwan and he went to Mahdiya. Yunus bin Yahya captured Qairwan.

## Civil War

In Cairo Mustansir's mother had every order she wanted issued according to her will. Her power and influence had increased beyond all limits. In view of protecting themselves the ministers began to recruit Turkish men. The army was dominated by a few powerful groups the slaves, the Katami clan, the Berbers and the Turkish. Nasir ud-Daula bin Hamdan, a Sudanese rose to the high position of Commander-in-Chief and became the leader and Commander of the Turks. Various administrative wings were being separated from the main body. Power struggles had started among the fundamental parts of the Government, Mustansir and his mother in Cairo. Each of them was trying hard to erode the power of the other. Civil war broke out between the Turks and the slaves and the army was divided into two factions one fighting against another. At last, Mustansir signaled for Badr Jamali ruling in Aakka to come. He came to Egypt with a huge Armenian army and appeared before Mustansir who appointed him as his minister. He also made the Turks understand that Nasir ud-Daula had plunged them into the flames of fighting and killings without any rhyme or reason. The Turks put Nasir ud-Daula to death for their own safety. Badr Jamali then become the chief of the Turks.

He gained tremendous power and influence, regularized the administration and won the confidence and satisfaction of everyone. With his internal peace and strength he was able to force the revolting chiefs to obey him and wrested Tripoli from the Arabs. All the territories of Palestine were annexed under his rule. Damascus was passing through a state of flux and anybody could capture and establish his authority but the Friday addresses were delivered in the name of the Egyptian Ubaidi ruler and the Cairo court was satisfied with that much. In 468 A.H., Badr Jamali was able to put the administration of Mustansir right to a great extent, Amir Aqdas captured Damascus and his address was delivered in the name of the Caliph of Baghdad. In 469 A.H. Atsaz bin Ufaq, the Commander of the Seljuk army attacked Damascus. Badr Jamali dispatched his troops, which besieged Damascus. In 470 A.H., Sultan Malik Shah Seljuk entrusted Syria to Tatish Seljuk and authorized him to take the portion of Syria conquered by him. Thus Tatish made progress into Syria and attacked the city of Halib (Aleppo). When they refused to surrender, he laid a siege around Halib at the same time Atsaz was still under siege in Damascus. He sent word to Tatish that he was surrounded by Egyptian forces and if he failed to extend his help he would be forced to hand over Damascus to them. Tatish marched to Damascus immediately. On getting the news the Egyptian forces raised the siege and fled back to Egypt. Tatish reached Damascus killed Atsaz and captured Damascus.

Following this Halib also came under the rule of Tatish and gradually the whole of Syria. Hearing this Badr Jamali collected a huge army and invaded Damascus but failed to gain victory over Tatish. After this, the Egyptian forces attacked Syria several times but every time they met with failure. In 484 A.H. the Christians took Sicily away from the Muslims. Badr Jamali died in Rabia al-Awwal, 487 A.H. at the age of eighty years. Mustansir also died shortly thereafter. The early period of Mustansir was fraught with troubles and the Ubaidi dynasty was on the brink of being ruined. But Badr Jamali infused new blood and saved it from a certain death. Mustansir had three sons, Ahmed, Nazar and Abul Qasim. Mustansir had appointed Nazar as his crown prince:

## Hasan bin Sabbah Takes Ba'it

Hasan bin Sabah came to Egypt from Iraq in the guise of a merchant during the reign of Mustansir. He took *ba'it* at the hand of Mustansir and asked him about the next Imam. Mustansir said that his son Nazar would be his next Imam. Following this Hasan bin Sabah sought Mustansir's permission to go back to Iraq and start preaching in favor of his *Imamat* (Shiite Leadership) and Caliphate. Mustansir granted permission and sent him as his preacher. Hasan bin Sabah came to Iraq and started his work with missionary zeal and gradually captured Al-Mut Fort.

Mustansir had appointed Muhammad Malik as minister after the death of his father Badr Jamali. Muhammad Malik and Nazar were not having good relations at that time so, after the demise of Mustansir, Muhammad Malik made Mustansir's sister declare that Mustansir had appointed Abul Qasim as his successor to the throne. Thus the people pledged their support to Abul Qasim who came to throne with the appellation of "Mustali Billah".

## Abdul Qasim Mustali Billah Ubaidi

Three days after Abul Qasim's accession to throne Nazar left Cairo for Alexandria. Badr Jamali's slave Nasir ud-Daula was then the Governor of Alexandria. But, on hearing of Abul Qasim's accession, he rose in revolt and lent his support to Nazar. Accepting his right to the throne he enthroned Nazar in Alexandria and took the oath of allegiance to him and gave him the appellation of "Mustafa Li-dinillah". With this news Abul Qasim's minister, Muhammad Malik rushed to punish Nazar and besieged Alexandria. Being distressed at the long siege the people sought peace at the cost of their city and handed Alexandria over to Muhammad Malik. He arrested Nazar and sent him to Cairo where Abul Qasim had him killed immediately. His minister carried Nasir ud-Daula Uftagin with him to Cairo. Abul Qasim put him to death as well.

It has already been mentioned that Tajuddaula Tatish Seljuk captured the entire country of Syria. Soon after the demise of Tatish his sons



Waqaq and Ridwan fell out with each other, which led to civil war. Waqaq had occupied Damascus while Ridwan possessed Halib. During this period, the Christians of Europe launched a joint attack to take Bait al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) from the Muslim's possession. They laid siege around Antioch (Antakya). Yaghisan, the Seljuk Governor fled for his life and he was killed by an Armenian who cut off his head and brought it to the Christian camp. The fall of Antioch and the assassination of Baghisan stirred Syria. Buqa, a Seljuk chief and ruler of Mosul, advanced towards the Christian invaders and camped at Marj Dabiq. Hearing this Waqaq bin Tatish and Sulaiman bin Ratiq, the ruler of Hims joined Buqa with their forces. All of them jointly marched ahead to combat the Christian troops. Muslim troops numbered much less than the Christian forces and they were beaten after a bloody fight. Thousands of Muslims laid down their lives on the battlefield. The Christian fighters plundered the Muslim camps. Following this the Christians captured Hims and then besieged Aakka. The Turk Seljuks did not give in despite many hardships.

The Christian troops were still besieging Aakka and all the Syrian Muslims had their attention centered on Syria when Muhammad Malik, the minister of Abul Qasim led a strong Egyptian force and invaded Bait al-Maqdis (Jerusalem). This Shi'ite assault benefited the Christians and the Islamic Syrian forces could not withstand the two-pronged attack. Sulaiman and Ilghazi were engaged with the Shi'ite assault on Bait al-Maqdis and could not extend any help against the Christians, with the result that Bait al-Maqdis fell to the Egyptians. Sulaiman and Ilghazi left towards the east. The Egyptians could not keep it in their possession for long. The Christians won Bait al-Maqdis on Shaban 23, A.H. after a siege of forty days. They stormed into the city a committed the large-scale massacre of Muslims. Muslims took refuge in the Arch of Daud (دَاوُد) so that the Christians would hold themselves back from their killing spree but there was nothing to put a check on their madness. Seventy thousand Muslims were put to sword in Al-Aqsa Mosque and Sakhra-e-Sulaiman. All the valuable possessions of the Aqsa Mosque including chandeliers of gold and silver were looted. The rest of the Muslims reached Baghdad in a very wretched state and narrated the tales of sufferings and woes to the Caliph of Baghdad. The Caliph wrote to the Seljuk Kings Barkayaraq,

Muhammad and Sanjar to save Syria but they were engaged in civil wars so deeply that they could not pay any attention to the message, with the result that Syria was reduced to ashes. The Egyptian minister who had provided the Christians with an opportunity to conquer Bait al-Maqdis once again led an army to restore it. However, the Christian forces came out and fought him back and none of the runaway Egyptian fighters could save their lives. The minister returned to Egypt in the company of only a few persons.

### **Death of Abul Qasim**

Abul Qasim died on Safar 15, 495 A.H. and was succeeded by his five-year son, Abu Ali with the appellation "Amir bi-Ihkamullah".

### **Abu Ali Amir Ubaldi**

With the accession of Abu Ali to the throne his minister took charge of all administrative affairs, he had wielded power during the reign of Abul Qasim who never took any action without him. The minister built a strong army and sent it against the Christians under the command of his father Badr Jamali's slave S'aduddaula. The Egyptian troops were beaten. With the news of the defeat he dispatched a huge army led by his son, Sharaf al-Ma'ali. The two forces clashed at Ramla and the Christians were defeated. Sharaf al-Ma'ali moved forward and besieged Ramla, which fell to him after two weeks. Four hundred Christians were killed and three hundred made prisoner. The Christian Commander left Ramla for Jaffa and made an advance towards Bait al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) along with the Christian pilgrims from Europe to the sacred city of Jerusalem. Hearing of the presence of the pilgrims Sharaf al-Ma'ali left for Egypt without fighting. The Christians then captured Asqalan without an encounter. However, the Egyptian army made a fresh attack and took Asqalan from the Christians. This event occurred in Dhul Hijjah 496 A.H.

Following this the Egyptian army attacked the Christians once again in 498 A.H. and the Turkish army in Damascus also came to help but the fighting bore no fruit. Among the cities on the Syrian coast Tripoli, Saur, Saida and Beirut were then under Egyptian rule. The Christian war fleets sprang into action and captured Syria after conquering all

the cities one by one. They conquered Bait al-Maqdis later and appointed a King for the country built on the debris of the conquered cities and territories. This set up Christian rule in Syria. It continued to gain strength and power because of the constant military and economic help from the European continent. Ubaidite rule remained inactive even though the new Christian country came into being from the Egyptian cities and territories won by the Christians. The Christian army failed to conquer Damascus, which was then under the rule of Seljuk chiefs, nor could they muster courage to invade the eastern parts of Syria. Had the Seljuk Kings and commanders abandoned their internal feuds and civil wars and paid their attention to Christian invaders they could not have stepped into Bait al-Maqdis.

Amir Ubaidi could not put up with the expanding influence and power of his minister and had him killed in 515 A.H., and appointed another man as his minister with the appellation of "Jalal al-Islam." A few years after he grew angry at Jalal al-Islam too and had Jalal killed along with his brother Mu'taman and his well wisher Najibuddaula.

### **Assassination of Amir Ubaidi**

At last, some Qaramatians killed Amir Ubaidi in 524 A.H. when he was getting on his mount. Since he had left no son, his cousin, Abdul Majeed, who adopted "Hafiz Li-Dinillah" as his appellation, succeeded him. The people in general pledged their oath of allegiance to him on the condition that if the pregnant wife of Amir delivered a male child he would be considered as the true successor to the throne.

### **Hafiz Ubaidi**

After accession to throne Hafiz Ubaidi killed many ministers one by one. At last he appointed his son as his minister. He also hatched a conspiracy to wrest the throne from his father. Hafiz Ubaidi then replaced his son by a man named Ridwan who belonged to the Sunni Muslims. He faced joint opposition from the Shiites and Imamites and relinquished his position as minister. Following this Hafiz Ubaidi carried out his administrative business without a minister.

## Death of Hafiz Ubaldi

Hafiz Ubaldi died at the age of 70. His son Abu Mansur Ismail who adopted "Zafir billah" as his appellation succeeded him.

## Zafir bin Hafiz Ubaldi

Zafir appointed Adil bin Salar, Governor of Alexandria as his minister. Being at the helm of affairs, Adil turned Zafir into a figurehead. The Christian army besieged Asqalan in 548 A.H. The people of Asqalan sent a message for help to the court of Cairo. Adil sent Abbas bin Abi al-Futuh to Asqalan to combat the besieging Christians. Zafir and Abbas jointly made a secret plan to do away with Adil. Abbas himself went away with the army and halted at Balbis. Abbas's young son Nasir killed Adil while he was sleeping. On receiving news of Adil's assassination Abbas returned to Cairo and handed over the ministry to him. During all of this nobody paid any attention to the distress of the people of Asqalan. Finding no way out they surrendered to the Christians.

## Zafir's Assassination

Nasir invited Zafir to a feast during Muharram 549 A.H. and then Nasir killed Zafir and his companions and had them buried in that very house. The next day Abbas bin Abi al-Futuh, the minister came to the royal palace as usual and inquired about King Zafir. They expressed ignorance and Abbas left the palace. The court officials then went to Zafir's brother Jibril and Yusuf and narrated to them that Zafir had gone to the house of Nasir and did not return from there. Yusuf and Jibril then advised him to acquaint Abbas, the minister with what was happening. Abbas fell in doubt about Yusuf and Jibril's part in the plot and he had them killed along with both of the sons of Hasan bin Hafiz. He then entered the royal palace and forcibly lifted Zafir's son on his lap and had him seated on the throne and gave him the appellation of "Fa'iz bi-Nasrillah." He then took the oath of allegiance from the people for the boy. Since five members of the royal family were slain the ladies of the royal family sent their envoy secretly to Saleh bin Zarik, the Governor of Athumonin and Nabsa, they

acquainted him with all the events and requested him to punish Abbas. Because of this Saleh bin Zarik collected his fighters and marched to Cairo. Knowing that even the people of Cairo had risen against him he took his son, Nasir and friend, Osama bin Manqad and left for Syria and Iraq along with the main body of his forces. On the way he came into a clash with the Christians. During the encounter Abbas was killed, Nasir was held and Osama escaped and reached Syria. Saleh reached Cairo in Rabia al Thani, 559 A.H. after the departure of Abbas. He dug out the dead body of Zafir from Nasir's house and had it buried in the royal graveyard. He then took oath of allegiance to Zafir's son, Fa'iz and gave him the appellation of "*Malik al-Saleh*."

### **Fa'iz bin Zafir Ubaidi**

Saleh became the minister and started regularizing the administration. He then came into correspondence with the Christians and had Nasir bin Abbas repatriated in return for a settled amount. When Christian officials brought him to Cairo, Saleh put him to death and hung his body on public display. Saleh was a staunch follower of the Imamia sect and a great well wisher of the Ubaidite dynasty.

After getting rid of Nasir he turned towards the rebel chiefs who had the courage to oppose the central government. Two of the most prominent among them were Taj-ul-Mulk Qaimaz and Ibn Ghalib. Saleh he deputed Generals and troops to capture them but being informed before hand, they escaped to unknown places. However, his action proved effective so much so that the other Generals submitted to his rule. He also replaced all the old guards and officials with his own men. He then transferred the valuable assets of the royal palace to his own house. Fa'iz Ubaidi's paternal aunt was watching the growing power of Saleh with anxiety and she began to think of how to get rid of him. Saleh came to know of the plot against him and he went to the royal palace and put her to death.

### **Death of Fa'iz Ubaidi**

After a nominal rule of six months King Fa'iz Ubaidi died in 555 A.H. Following this Saleh bin Zarik asked the guards to bring the boys of the royal family before him so that one of them might be chosen for

the throne. Thus Abu Muhammad Abdullah bin Yusuf Hafiz Ubaidi was given the throne with the appellation of "Azid Li-dinillah". He was then at the age of puberty. Saleh gave his daughter in marriage to the new King Azid.

### **Azid bin Yusuf Ubaidi**

Since Saleh was the virtual ruler and Azid was considered the nominal one. The nobles and courtiers disliked these developments. The younger paternal aunt of Azid vowed to avenge the blood of her elder sister by putting Saleh to death. At last she persuaded some Sudanese nobles to do away with the culprit. One of them struck Saleh with his lance so that he fell down and died shortly after coming to his house. Before his death he advised Azid to appoint his son as his minister. Azid did accordingly and entrusted the ministry to Saleh's son with the appellation of "Adil". Shortly after assuming charge as minister he killed Azid's paternal aunt and the Sudanese noble with the permission of Azid. As a first step in bringing about the administrative reforms, Azid deposed Shadar S'adi, the Governor of Sa'id and put Amir bin Raq'a in his place. Shadar rose in revolt against Adil and led an army to Cairo. Adil could not face him and fled away. Shadar entered Cairo with his colors flying in 558 A.H. and Zarik Adil was caught and brought to Cairo and was killed. Shadar made no delay in taking over the office of the minister and Azid conferred the post of Prime Minister on him. Nine months after the event Dergham, the Inspector of the Palace grew in power and forced Shadar out of Cairo and took the office of the minister. Shadar left for Syria. Dergham killed Ali, the son of Shadar in Cairo and did away with all the Generals and nobles he feared.

### **Nuruddin Muhammad Zangi Turns to Egypt**

Shadar reached Syria and narrated to Nuruddin Muhammad Zangi what was going on in Egypt. After many deliberations, Sultan Nuruddin asked his commander Asaduddin Sherko to accompany Shadar to Cairo at the head of an army. Sherko was instructed to appoint Shadar as the minister by deposing Dergham and fight back the forces standing in the way. After dispatching Shadar and Sherko

to Egypt Sultan Nuruddin himself led an army towards the Christians so that they would not stop the movement of Sherkoh's troops. Sherkoh and Shadar moved smoothly up to Balbis where Nasiruddin and Fakhruddin, the brothers of Dergham challenged them on the way. Sherkoh repulsed their attack and captured both of them and entered Egypt victoriously. Dergham fled for his life but was caught on the way and killed. Similarly, both Nasiruddin and Fakhruddin were put to death. Shadar took over as Prime Minister once again. However, after holding the high post Shadar committed a breach of promise and Sherkoh had to leave Egypt in frustration. Instead of giving thanks to Nuruddin and Sherkoh, Shadar joined hands with the Christians against Nuruddin's rule. In view of the notoriety of Shadar, Sherkoh invaded Egypt in 562 A.H. after seeking permission from King Nuruddin, and captured a number of Egyptian cities.

### **Egyptians Seek Help From the Christians**

Shadar sought immediate help from the Christians. They were already waiting for such opportunity and sent their military help without any loss of time. Asaduddin Sherkoh's comparatively small army of two thousand men was nothing in comparison to the heavy joint forces of Shadar and the Christians. However, Sherkoh took the field in the name of Allah and fought so gallantly that both the forces suffered ignominious defeat. Sherkoh, already some one to be feared by the Egyptians, moved ahead towards Alexandria and the citizens welcomed his arrival by opening the doors of their city. After appointing his nephew, Salahuddin bin Najmuddin Ayub, Governor of Alexandria, Sherkoh marched to Sa'id. As he left Alexandria for Sa'id the Egyptian force concentrated in Cairo started getting ready to attack Alexandria. On receiving this information Sherkoh rushed to help his nephew, Salahuddin. However, in the meantime, Shadar had been able to lure away some of the Generals of Sherkoh who were found fighting rather half-heartedly. In such an anxious moment Sherkoh received a message from Shadar with the request to leave Alexandria after receiving some indemnity from him. After much deliberations and looking into the pros and cons, Sherkoh decided to grant the petition with honor. He took the indemnity, vacated Alexandria and returned to Syria.

## **Consequences of Indiscretion**

Shadar had to withstand the worst of his indiscretion. The Christian force, which had come to Egypt at the call of Shadar, would not agree to leave the country at any cost. They rather laid the foundation for capturing Egypt. They finally put forward a number of conditions for their departure, which Shadar had to concede under circumstantial compulsion. The conditions were the following: (1) The Christian army would remain in Cairo. (2) An administrator would reside in Cairo on behalf of the Christians. (3) The Christians will keep control over the doors of the fortified city. (4) The Egyptian ruler would continue to give to the Christian King one hundred thousand dinars annually.

When the Christians set their feet firmly on Egyptian soil, they started meddling with the administrative affairs of the central government. They annexed Balbis under Christian rule. Their next step was to capture the capital, Cairo. In order to carry out their nefarious design they, with the active support of Shadar, called a large Christian army, demanded two hundred thousand dinars instead of one hundred thousand and large quantities of grain. Azid Ubaidi grew very anxious at these excesses on the part of the Christians.

## **Azid Turning to Nuruddin Zangi for Help**

Azid sent his envoy to Sultan Nuruddin Zangi to help take away the Christian possession of Egypt. On being informed Shadar made an all out effort to hold Azid back from seeking help from Nuruddin and Azid kept silent. Sultan Nuruddin asked his Commander, Sherkoh to march in the company of his nephew, Salahuddin and other Generals. Asaduddin Sherkoh marched to Egypt. He ravaged the Christian camp and appeared before King Azid who held him in high esteem and served him and his army as his honored guests. One day Azid drew Sherkoh's attention to Shadar's friendship with the Christians and his enmity with themselves and proposed to get rid of the scourge. Sherkoh agreed and ordered his Generals to kill Shadar. Shadar's head was brought before Azid in a few days. Being overjoyed and highly satisfied Azid offered the highest office of the Prime Minister to Sherkoh, which he accepted with the permission of Nuruddin Zangi. However, he could enjoy this envious position only for a few months and died in 565 A.H.



## **Salahuddin Ayubi as Prime Minister of Egypt**

Azid appointed Sherkoh's nephew, Salahuddin as Prime Minister. Salahuddin kept his relations with Nuruddin intact. Like Sherkoh, Nuruddin entrusted full authority to Salahuddin. Both Sherkoh and Salahuddin were staunch followers of Imam Shafe'i. Salahuddin took the drastic step of replacing the Shi'ite Jurist and Judges by scholars of the Shafe'i school of thought. He also laid the foundation of Shafe'i and Maliki madrasas (schools). Since 565 A.H. when Sherkoh assumed the post of the Prime Minister, he had not only driven away the Christian troops from Egypt but also stopped paying tribute to them. The Christians grew anxious at the unity forged between Damascus and Cairo for under such circumstances it was impossible for them to keep control over Bait al-Maqdis (Jerusalem). They sent messages to the bishops of Sicily and Spain for immediate help to save Bait al-Maqdis. Following this the bishops and clergies began to deliver sermons on joining the crusade against the Muslims, with the result that the Christian forces from Spain and the rest of Europe started concentrating on the coast of Syria. After gaining strength, as a result of the massive help they received from all over Europe, the Christians marched ahead and surrounded Damiyat. The Governor, Shamsul Khawas Mankur informed Salahuddin Ayubi. The Shiites of Egypt were angry with Salahuddin Ayubi, the Egyptian minister. Salahuddin sent an officer named Bahauddin Qaraqush to Damiyat at the head of an army. He also wrote Sultan Nuruddin Zangi to keep an eye on Damiyat, as he himself could not leave Egypt for fear of the disruptive activities on the part of the Shiites and the Sudanese. Thus Nuruddin Zangi invaded the coastal areas of Syria to divide the power and attention of the Christians. When they raised the siege under compulsion and moved back towards their cities, they were shocked to find them ruined and deserted. After this Salahuddin Ayubi called his father, Najmuddin Ayub to Egypt from Syria. King Azid came in person to greet him and held him in great honor. Azid was a great admirer of the services of Salahuddin and he had practically nothing to do with the administrative affairs. However, the Egyptian Shiites were opposed to the growing power and influence of

Salahuddin. Moreover, the Sunni Muslims were flourishing during his time. However, Ammarah, Yemeni, Zubaidi, Awirash and others made a secret plan to hand over Egypt to the Christians. They also thought of arranging a secret meeting between Azid and the Christian envoy. With this purpose in view they tried, on one hand, to bring Azid around to their own opinion and entered into correspondences with the Christians on the other. Accidentally, one of the letters addressed to the Christian King was intercepted on the way and was produced before Salahuddin. He first tried to find who were the real culprits, he recorded their statements in an open court of law and put all the criminals to death. Bahauddin was appointed as inspector of the royal palace. This event led the Sudanese, numbering fifty thousands, to become angry and they rose against Salahuddin and the Turkish troops. At last, fierce fighting broke out between the Turks and the Sudanese and the Turks won the battle. A large number of Sudanese either fell fighting or escaped. The Turkish soldiers ransacked their houses. However, Salahuddin restored normalcy and rehabilitated the Sudanese and gave them back their houses. Because of these events, the strength and influence of the Sudanese diminished to a great extent. Sultan Nuruddin Zangi wrote to Salahuddin to begin delivering his addresses in the name of Caliph Mustadi Abbasi instead of Azid. At this time Azid was seriously ill and was near to death. In Muharram 567 A.H., the Friday address was delivered in the name of the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad from the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Cairo and nobody opposed the change. From the next Friday the addresses were delivered in the name of the Caliph of Baghdad from the pulpit of all the mosques of Egypt.

### **Death of Azid Ubaidi.**

King Azid Ubaidi died on 10 Muharram 567 A.H. With his demise ended the Ubaid dynasty and the Abbasid Caliphate staged a comeback. Egypt once again became a part of the Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad. Salahuddin Ayubi was given from the caliph of Baghdad a royal order to rule Egypt with royal attire and scepter. It was the beginning of the Ayubi dynasty in place of Ubaidites.

## **A Short Commentary on the Ubaidite Dynasty**

Ubaidi dynasty (also known incorrectly as the Fatimids) ruled for two hundred and seventy years. It was first set up in western area of Africa and Tripoli. They later captured Egypt and chose Cairo as their capital. The Idrisite rule of Morocco is generally considered as the Alwis Shi'ite rule. But in fact, Idrisite rule was that of the Berbers and was, therefore only semi-Shi'ite. Idrisites had nothing in their creed and action that could be construed as being superior to the Sunnis, nor did the Idrisite have any enmity with the Sunnis'. However, the foundation of this rule was laid down by Idris who used the Ahlil Bai't (family of the Prophet ﷺ) to succeed in drawing the masses towards him. Except for this, nothing was done as Shi'ite as we know the practices of the Shi'ites to be. However, Ubaidite rule was Shi'ite, but certainly not the Alwi type of Shi'ite. Ubaidullah's grandfather, writes Sayuti in Tarikh al-Khulfa, was a Magian and a blacksmith. Although Ubaidullah Mahdi claimed to be Fatmid during his visit to the western territory the majority of experts in lineal genealogy decline to accept his claim. Aziz Ubaidi wrote a letter to the Umayyad Caliph of Spain, which contained abuse and satire about the Caliph's family. The Caliph wrote back that he (Aziz) had passed satirical remarks about the Caliph's family because he knew about his ancestors but he (the Caliph) could not do the same and pass such remarks because his (Aziz's) ancestors were unknown to him. Although Aziz was disgusted at these remarks he kept silent. The Ubaid are generally known as Fatimids but this shows sheer ignorance of the realities and this name is only based on a false claim. Ubaid were generally Isma'ili Shi'ites. They are also called *Batnis*. One of their branches was founded by Hasan bin Sabah, which had Al Mut Fort as its capital. This is also called Fida'is' rule and they also were not Alwi.

Thousands of devout Muslims were killed during the Ubaid dynasty simply because they refused to disgrace the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. The Ubaidite dynasty did no service to Islam nor did they leave any record of deeds in any field that could make one be proud of and some of our religious scholars have declared them apostate. Some of them including Azid Ubaidi claimed to know the unseen. Wine was also permissible according to them.

## **Qaramatians of Bahrain**

### **Yahya bin Faraj Qaramate**

Bahrain is a country, which has the Persian Gulf towards the east, Oman towards the south, Yamama towards the west and Basra towards the north. The country is called Bahrain after the name of one of its cities. Sometimes Bahrain is called Hajar after another city. A third city named Hafiriya was ravaged by the Qaramatians and they founded another city named Ahsa. Hence the country is known as Ahsa as well. This city was the center of the territory of Ahsa. Ubaid and Qaramatian dynasties came into being about the same time. Both were Isma'ili Shi'ite and had almost the same creed. In 275 A.H. a person named Yahya bin Faraj appeared on the outskirts of Kufah. He introduced himself by the name of Qaramate and claimed to be the envoy of Imam Mahdi. He passed most of his time in prayers. He charged from his followers one dinar each in the name of Imam Mahdi. When his followers rose in number, he sent some of his disciples as preachers to various parts of the country. Being acquainted with these activities, the Governor of Kufah arrested him. A few days after Qaramate escaped from the prison and disappeared. His disappearance led his disciples and followers to believe that he was undoubtedly the envoy of Imam Mahdi.

Qarmate's (Caramate) teachings were strange. The way of performing Salat (prayer) was quite different and they observed fasts on particular days of particular months instead of Ramadan. He had declared wine lawful and nabeedh unlawful. Wudu (ablution) was enough after sexual pollution. Tail-bearing animals and those having five toes were prohibited. A few days after Yahya bin Faraj, known as Qarmate, appeared again after his disappearance and began to collect people around him by adopting the appellation "Qa'im bil-Haq" (Who stands up with Truth). The Governor of Kufa Ahmad bin Muhammad Ta'i attacked him with his troops and dispersed his men. Following this event, some Arabian tribes became his followers. He again gathered strength and attacked Damascus in 290 A.H. but Balkh the Governor of Damascus, after a series of encounters, killed Yahya and dispersed his party.

### **Husain Mahdi**

Husain, the brother of Yahya appeared on the scene with the appellation of "Mahdi Amirul-Mominin". He collected some people, especially the desert-dwellers and continued plundering the outskirts of Damascus and Syria. Abbasid Generals were deployed to catch them. One of his sons Abul Qasim escaped but "Mahdi Amirul-Mominin" was caught and killed. This event occurred in 291 A.H. Husain's brother also fled the territory and thus saved himself. He later collected a band of desert-dwellers and plundered Tabriya and San'a city and occupied Yemen. They also created disturbances in Yemen, Hijaz and Syria.

### **Yahya II**

Close on the heels of Yahya bin Faraj's escape from the prison a person also named Yahya appeared in the town of Qatif adjoining Bahrain and claimed in 281 A.H. to be the real envoy of the Imam Mahdi. Giving news that Imam Mahdi was to appear in the immediate future he claimed that he had also brought a personal letter from the Imam Mahdi. Hearing this, Ali bin Mualla bin Hamdan, an extremist Shiite, assembled his community in Qatif and read out to the audience the letter claimed to be brought by Yahya from the Imam Mahdi. The contents of the letter sent the Shiites into great jubilation.

The news spread like wild fire in the outskirts of Bahrain. Among them was an influential and respectable person named Abu Sayeed Hasan bin Bahram Janabi. Shortly after that, Yahya disappeared and reappeared again with another letter from Imam Mahdi enjoining his followers to contribute thirty-six dinars each to Yahya. They did it with all pleasure. Soon after collecting the money he disappeared once again and came back with a third letter from Imam Mahdi ordering each of his followers to deposit with Yahya one-fifth of their possessions in the name of the Imam. This order was carried out as well.

### **Abu Sayeed Janabi**

Since Abu Sayeed Janabi was an influential person, he began his preaching mission in Bahrain too. Gradually, a large number of desert-dwellers turned towards Abu Sayeed. Abu Sayeed trained his followers in warfare and proceeded with his men from Qatif to Basra. When, Ahmad bin Muhammad Yahya came to know of the preparations of Abu Sayeed he finding himself weak, informed the Caliph of the new developments. The Caliph sent orders to Abbas bin Umar Ghanwi, the Governor of Persia to save Basra. Abbas marched to the trouble spot at the head of a two thousand man army. During the encounter, Abu Sayeed captured Abbas and plundered his military camp. Abbas was released shortly but his men were put to death. This initial success encouraged Abu Sayeed and he attacked and occupied Hajr and founded his capital there. He appointed his son, Sayeed as his crown-prince. This step angered Abu Sayeed's younger brother, Abu Tahir Sulaiman. He assassinated Abu Sayeed and declared himself the Chief of the Qaramatians.

### **Abu Tahir**

Soon after assuming power, Abu Tahir attacked Basra in 288 A.H. and returned to Bahrain after plundering Basra. Caliph Muqtadir grew very anxious and he ordered the immediate fortification of Basra. Abu Tahir continued to rule Bahrain rather successfully. During this period, he corresponded with Ubaidullah Mahdi (Fatimid Dynasty of North Africa) and the latter expressed his satisfaction over Abu Tahir's way of governance. Abu Tahir attacked Basra again in 311 A.H. and ravaged it

totally. The Grand Mosque of Basra was also demolished and was not rebuilt for a long time. The marketplaces were reduced to ashes.

### **Abu Tahir's Plunder**

Abu Tahir came out in 312 A.H. to pillage the caravans of pilgrims (Hajjis). He arrested the royal commander, Abul Haija bin Hamdun accompanying the caravan and looted the Pilgrims completely and went back to Hajr. Abu Tahir then attacked Iraq in 314 A.H. and ravaged the outskirts of Kufa like Basra. Once back in Bahrain he plunged heart and soul in populating the city of Ahssa and doing extensive construction work there. During this period, he built palaces for his fellows and made the city his permanent capital. Abu Tahir attacked Oman in 315 A.H. The Governor of Oman took refuge in Persia and Abu Tahir declared Oman as a province under his rule. He began a series of attacks towards the north in 316 A.H. Caliph Muqtadir Abbasi called Yusuf bin Abi As'saj from Azerbaijan, conferred on him the authority to rule Wasit and then ordered him to fight with Abu Tahir. After a heavy fight, Yusuf was beaten and arrested. This news created quite a sensation in Baghdad. Abu Tahir set out from Kufa to Anbar. The Caliph deployed Generals like Munis khadim, Muzaffar, and Harun but all of them came back to Baghdad after being beaten by Abu Tahir. He then proceeded to Rahba and ravaged it too. Jazirah province experienced the same plight at his hands and nobody advanced to check his wanton excesses.

### **Invasion Of Makkah**

Abu Tahir invaded Makkah in 317 A.H. During his wild action, he killed a large number of Hujjaj, plundered Makkah, uprooted the doors of Ka'bah, pulled off the cover of Ka'bah and distributed its pieces among his army. He also removed the *Hajr al-Aswad* (Black Stone) and carried it with him saying that the next Hajj would be performed in his territory. Many influential chiefs corresponded with Abu Tahir to return the Black Stone and they offered up to fifty thousand dinars for the return of the sacred stone but he did not agree. He continued his ruinous activities and went on rampaging Iraq and Syria. He levied heavy taxes on the people of Damascus too.

## **Abu Mansur**

His elder brother Ahmad succeeded Abu Tahir. He is known by his filial appellation of Abu Mansur. A section of the Qaramatians refused to recognize him as a ruler and acknowledged Abu Tahir's elder son as the real one. In order to sort out the controversy the Qaramatians sent their messenger to Tripoli to put the case before Abul Qasim Ubaidi who was to them all the envoy of Imam Mahdi. Abul Qasim Ubaidi passed his judgment that Abu Mansur should be recognized as the ruler and Sabur ibn Abu Tahir as his successor. They happily agreed to the decision. Abul Qasim Ubaidi died in 334 A.H. and was succeeded by Ismail Ubaidi in Africa. Abu Mansur sent felicitations upon his accession through his envoy. Isma'il Ubaidi wrote to Abu Mansur more than once to send the Black Stone back to the Ka'bah. Abu Mansur finally returned the Stone. During the reign of Abu Mansur, the Qaramatians launched very few attacks on other countries and he paid more attention to internal stability and administrative reforms.

## **Sabur's Assassination**

In 358 A.H., Sabur bin Abu Tahir arrested Abu Mansur and killed his brothers and supporters who had aided and abetted in the crime concerning the Black Stone. Sabur captured the throne but he could not save himself from the opposition of his brothers. They stormed the capital and took out their uncle Abu Mansur from the prison. After coming back to the throne, Abu Mansur assassinated Sabur and banished his supporters to Awall Island. Abu Mansur died in 359 A.H. Abu Ali Hasan bin Ahmad with the appellation of "Azam" succeeded him. On coming to the throne, he banished all the sons of Abu Tahir to Awall Island.

## **Hasan Azam, The Qaramite**

Hasan Azam was moderate in his thought and beliefs. He was not so devoted to the Ubaidi nor did he hate the Abbasid Caliphate. It has already been mentioned that Abu Tahir had levied an annual tribute



on Damascus and the rulers of Damascus had to send the amount to the Qaramatian king to avoid the death and destruction of their people. At the time of the enthronement of Azam, J'afar bin Falah Katami had conquered Damascus and established his rule. Azam demanded the tribute from the new ruler but he refused it completely. Azam dispatched an army to Damascus. Mu'iz Ubaidi was moving from Qairwan to Cairo when news came to him of this development, he wrote to the Qaramatians to hold back Azam from such an action, otherwise, he would proclaim the deposition of Azam by declaring the sons of Abu Tahir the rightful heirs to the throne. When Azam knew of this, he rose against the Ubaidi and started delivering addresses in the name of Abbasid Caliphate in all his territories. The army dispatched at first by Azam to Damascus was defeated by J'afar Katami in 360 A.H. Then Azam himself led an army in 361 A.H. and captured Damascus by killing J'afar Katami on the battlefield. He brought peace to the people of Damascus and then marched to Egypt.

During the time when Azam the Qarmate was engaged in Syria and Egypt, Mu'iz Ubaidi wrote to the sons of Abu Tahir, who were then confined on Awall Island that they should go ahead and capture Ahsa. He himself pronounced in Bahrain that he had bestowed the rule of Bahrain on the sons of Abu Tahir by deposing Azam. As a result of this, the sons of Abu Tahir ravaged Ahsa. Having seen this, Ta'i Abbasi, the Caliph of Baghdad wrote a letter to the sons of Abu Tahir not to create any disturbances and they should obey his orders. Azam was not paying attention to the events, when finally he came back to Ahsa and put them right. Meanwhile Mu'iz Ubaidi's troops captured all of Syria in 363 A.H. Then Azam came back to Syria at the head of his army, beat and pushed out the Ubaidi forces from Syria and made progress into Egypt up to Balbis. Mu'iz Ubaidi lured away a large part of Azam's army and a number of Generals. In this way, Azam was defeated and he went back to Ahsa, and different Arab chiefs occupied Syria. Some Turkish Generals were also trying to capture Damascus at the same time. Mu'iz Ubaidi himself set out to Damascus in 365 A.H., but died on the way. Azam conquered Syria once again in 366 A.H. Since Azam had offered his allegiance to Abbasid caliphate and he strongly hated the Ubaidi, the Qaramatians felt frustrated by being alienated from their natural allies the Ubaidi

and aligned with their historical enemies and they rose up against him. The revolt succeeded in great part because Azam was then engaged in Syria far away from his capital. When Azam returned from Syria, he found everyone antagonistic to him and his cavalry also joined the insurgents. They arrested Azam and replaced him jointly by J'afar and Ishaq. Azam and his relatives were banished to Awall Island. Abu Tahir's progeny were already passing their lives in banishment on the island, and they killed the newcomers to the island right away without delay.

### **J'afar And Ishaq**

J'afar and Ishaq took hold of the Qaramatians and immediately after assuming power they turned away from the Abbasids and acknowledge the Ubaidites (Fatimids). They started delivering addresses in the name of the Ubaidite king. They then attacked Kufa and occupied it. Izz ud-Daula bin Boya dispatched an army to punish the Qaramatians but was thoroughly beaten and chased up to Qadsiyah. Then enmity arose between J'afar and Ishaq and each of them attempted to destroy the other to rule alone. It resulted in weakness and frustration among the Qaramatians. Other Qaramatian Generals also staked their claims to kingdom, with the result that Asgher bin Abul Hasan Taghlabi captured Bahrain and Bari Mukarram occupied Oman. They offered their allegiance to the Abbasids and Taghlabid dynasty wiped out all signs of the Qaramatian from Bahrain by 375 A.H.

## **Kingdom Of The Qaramatians Batinians Of Persia**

Soon after the destruction of the empire the Qaramatian creed underwent a drastic change. Even though the belief of Azam, the King of the Qaramatians' of Bahrain were different from other Qaramatians and he vehemently hated the Ubaidite king of Egypt, the Qaramatians in general looked upon the Ubaidite ruler with love and respect and accepted him as their king. Now when the Bahrain ruler slipped out of their hands and they had already lost Iraq and Syria as a shelter, they took to forming their own groups, and even though they kept mixing with the Muslims, they continued their preaching mission secretly. Like the Ubaidites, they appointed their preachers for different places. These preachers kept their activities a secret. They would go to people in the guise of devotes and divines and make their disciples from among them. And among these disciples, they entitled those as "Rafiq" (comrade) whom they found of kindred spirit. They then taught such people their own lessons. They created two classes, the preachers and the "Rafiqs" (comrades). These preachers spread all over Syria, Iraq, Persia and Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan). The Ubaidite king helped

and patronized them. These preachers used to get all kinds of help secretly from Egypt. In this way, the Ubaidites imperceptibly spread the net of the Qaramatian preachers into various Islamic countries. The Seljuks kept occupying Islamic countries and were unaware of their secret enemy. After the fall of the Qaramatians in Bahrain, the Qaramatian teachings and the entire congregation turned into a group of preachers. The Ubaidite rule, therefore, felt no need to send its members from Egypt to Iraq as they were constantly supporting the clandestine activities of the Qaramatian preachers. At times, these preachers would turn into robbers and bandits with the help of their "Rafiqs." They had taught their disciples and followers to kill anybody outside their creed without any sense of crime. The Muslims in general had to suffer too much as their rage multiplied. They made it a regular feature of their operations to kill Muslim chiefs, generals and commanders whenever they found an opportunity. However, they kept quiet wherever they found the ruler alert and vigilant, but they flourished in the territories of weaker ones. Since the Qaramatians had donned the attire of piety and divinity and deceiving a Muslim was an act of virtue and reward to them, they found opportunities to secure positions of power in various Muslim courts. A certain person from their group was once appointed as a garrison commander. He made the fort a center to let loose a reign of terror, banditry and looting on the entire surrounding area. Since the party carried out its activities clandestinely, it came to be called *Batiniah* (hidden). These *Batiniahs* gradually became strong enough to seize the Shahwar Fort of Isfahan. One of the *Batiniah* preachers was a man named Attash who was a distinguished personality among his people. He was the man who had taught his creed to Hasan bin Sabbah and had virtually made him his pupil.

### **Ahmad Bin Attash**

Attash had a son named Ahmad who commanded respect among his people like his father. Ahmad took leave of his group, he had the appearance of a wealthy young man and he met the garrison commander of Shahwar Fort and became employed there. Within a few days, Ahmad showed such an example of duty and responsibility

that he was appointed as a deputy to the garrison commander and was entrusted with all the powers in decision making. Shortly after that the garrison commander died Ahmad secured the same post for himself. Being at the helm of affairs Ahmad bin Attash released all the prisoners of the Batiniah group who fell under his jurisdiction. Soon after being released, they went on a rampage in Isfahan, looting and killing people throughout the territory. During the same period Hasan bin Sabbah was spreading his conspiratorial net all over the areas of Taliqan and Qazwin.

### **Hasan Bin Sabbah**

Hasan bin Sabbah was the classmate of Nizamul Mulk Tusi the prime minister of Malik Shah bin Alp of the Arsalan Seljuks. He first tried to find access to the royal court through Nizamul Mulk but later changed his mind and came to the service of Abu Muslim, a relative of the Nizamul Mulk who was a garrison commander. As an aide to him, he began to spread the net of his plots. Meanwhile, Abu Muslim came to know that spies from the Ubaidite ruler of Egypt would come to Hasan bin Sabbah. He interrogated Hasan bin Sabbah about the matter and when Hasan bin Sabbah saw that his secret was disclosed he escaped the territory and went to Mustansir Ubaidi in Egypt who showed respect to him. Hasan then offered his allegiance to Mustansir, who became happy and sent him on a preaching mission to Persia and Iraq by conferring on him the post of Head of the Preachers. He was entrusted with the task of inculcating in people the spirit to support Mustansir's leadership and caliphate. Mustansir Ubaidi had three sons named Ahmad, Nazar and Abul Qasim. On the eve of taking leave Hasan bin Sabbah asked Mustansir who would be chosen as Imam after him. "My son Nazar", Mustansir replied. Nazar was virtually made crown prince by Mustansir. But, the Minister and the sister of Mustansir, after the demise of the king, joined hands and brought Abul Qasim to the throne through a conspiracy. But Hasan bin Sabbah declined to accept the leadership of Abul Qasim and supported Nazar as the rightful successor to the throne. It is because of this that Hasan bin Sabbah's party is also called Nazaria. Hasan bin Sabbah left Egypt and reached Khurasan via Asia Minor and Mosul.

The Governor ruling Taliqan and Qahistan had entrusted the Alamut Fort to an Alwi. Hasan bin Sabbah went to the Alwi who greeted him with respect and asked him to stay as his honored guest. Hasan enjoyed his stay in the Fort as a devout Muslim but kept his mind engaged in planning how to bring the Fort under his control. With the completion of his plan, he turned the Alwi out of the Fort and began to rule it. This event took place during the period of Malik Shah Seljuk. When his Minister Nizamul Mulk Tusi heard of this event, he sent an army to chastise Hasan bin Sabbah. By then Hasan bin Sabbah had gained strength and stabilized his position. Fighting between the two broke out and lingered on. In the meantime, Hasan bin Sabbah persuaded a section of the Batiniyah sect to do away with Nizamul Mulk. He was killed and the army he was leading went back. This initial success worked as a great encouragement and Hasan bin Sabbah's expansionist urge began to increase. During these days a man, named Munawwar from the Sassanid dynasty was the Governor of Qahistan. His relations with the Seljuk rulers worsened and the situation took such a serious turn that Munawwar sought help from Hasan bin Sabbah who gave it without loss of time and he captured Qahistan. Hasan bin Sabbah's power and influence progressed rapidly. In the meantime, civil war broke out among Seljuk chiefs, and they had to seek help from Hasan bin Sabbah instead of making an offensive against him. As a result of this, the area of his power and influence kept expanding very rapidly. King Berkeyaruq had to seek help from the Batiniyah sect to take on his brother Muhammad. Such a development added only to their importance. However, King Berkeyaruq then ordered the massacre of the Batiniyahs.

Ahmad bin Attash had established his own rule after occupying Shahwar Fort but the Seljuks surrounded Ahmad bin Attash and his companions and many of them had to buy peace on the condition of leaving Isfahan and its outskirts and joining Hasan bin Sabbah in Alamut Fort. They were granted amnesty on these terms alone. Ahmad bin Attash was arrested and killed and his wife committed suicide. This was how the Batiniyah sect met its doom in Isfahan however, the power of Hasan bin Sabbah increased more and more. Hasan bin Sabbah was the founder of a strong rule also he was the

founder of a new faith and sect. He came to be addressed as "Sayedna" by his followers. He passed thirty-five years of his life in the Alamut Fort and he did not come out of the Fort for a single day.

## **Death Of Hasan Bin Sabbah**

He died on Rabia al-Akhir 28, 518 A.H. at the ripe old age of 90. He collected human material from wild and savage men of hilly areas and turned them into such a fortified band and they would do anything at the command of their leader. They were known as the party of "Fidais" (pledged devotees). Aided and abetted by these "Fidais" it became easy for him to get powerful kings, commanders and antagonists assassinated in their own houses and, in this way, he had become a terror to everyone.

## **Kiya Buzurg Ummid**

After the demise of Hasan bin Sabbah, one of his disciples named Kiya Buzurg Ummid, succeeded him and occupied Alamut Fort. His dynasty reigned up to 655 A.H. Kiya Buzurg Ummid was succeeded by his son Hasan bin Muhammad who was succeeded by his son Muhammad, the second bin Hasan who was succeeded by Alaaddin Muhammad bin Jalaluddin Muhammad who was finally succeeded by Khurshah bin Alaaddin.

## **Ruknuddin Khurshah**

He was the last king of the "Fidais" who was arrested by Hulagu Khan the grandson of Genghis Khan and part of the Khan dynasty and his country and empire were destroyed with the destruction of Baghdad. Although the Fidais ruled over Alamut Fort and its suburbs for about one hundred years, during this long period the entire territory witnessed no sign of progress or development. When Genghis Khan began to ravage Muslim countries, the Fidais also sprang into action with their expansionist designs. They were still fulfilling their plans when they were invaded by Alaaddin Khwarizm Shah who struck a deadly blow to their power. He wrested from them all the forts and razed them to the ground allowing them all to take refuge in Alamut Fort. At last, Hulagu Khan put them all to death.

### **Those Assassinated By The Fidais**

Among those killed by the atheist *Fidais* were Khawaja Nizamul Mulk Tusi, the Prime Minister of King Alp Arsalan and Malik Shah Seljuk, Fakhrul Mulk bin Khawaja Nizamul Mulk, Shams Tabrizi, Maulana Rum, Nizamul Mulk Ma'ud bin Ali, Minister of Khwarizm Shah, Sultan Shahabuddin Muhammad Ghouri, some Christian kings of Europe and others. Sultan Salahuddin Ayubi and Imam Fakhruddin Razi were also threatened with murder but they remained unharmed.



## Chapter 16

# **Ganghisid Mongols, Turks and Tartar Mongols**

### Removal Of A Doubt

A student of history faces difficulty in making differences among the Turks, Mongols and Tartars, Turkmen, Kara Tartars etc. and their origins. He sometimes finds that the Seljuks, Alp Arslan and Tughril Beg were Turks and Genghis Khan appears to him as a Mongol. At another place, he comes across the same Genghis Khan who is a Turk, and a third place his campaigns are being mentioned as the trial of the Tartars. Now he comes to the natural conclusion that the Mongol, Turk and Tartar are one and the same people. But, later on, he finds the Mongols and the Turks fighting with one another, which gives him to believe that the Mongols and the Turks do not have common origin. When he goes through Indian history, he finds to his wonder that some Generals and Commanders are called Turks and they have entered into relations with the Mongols and in the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.H., we find India ruled by the Mughals. It also comes to his notice that the Mongols are called as "Mirza" and they necessarily carry 'Beg' as their title. But the reader finds 'Mirza' attached to the names as a title when he meets the Persian Kings in the pages of history. Uthmanid Turks

have also adopted Bek, Bey or Beg as titles. European historians sometimes describe the Mongol empires as Turkish empires. Therefore, it appears proper to clarify the differences between the Turks and the Mongols so that the student of history faces no confusion while going through the books of history.

### **Application Of 'Turk'**

Adam, the Second, Prophet Nuh (Noah) (ﷺ) had three sons named Ham, Sam and Yafith. The progeny of Yafith inhabited the eastern countries, China etc. From among them was a man named 'Turk' whose progeny spread all over China and Turkistan and were all known as 'Turk'. Some people consider Afrasiyab also as a Turk although he belonged to the Keyanid royal family of Persia and was the descendant of Faridun. Since he was the king of Turkistan, he is mistaken as belonging to Turks. The progeny of Turk bin Yafith flourished in China, Turkistan, and Khatan etc. In order to keep themselves organized and united they came under a chief and, gradually, every emerging tribe had its separate chieftains. However, all the chieftains were considered subordinate to the main chief. Every tribe belonging to the progeny of Turk bin Yafith came to be called 'Turk' and all the people inhabiting China, Khatan, Turkistan were known as Turks.

### **Turkan Ghez**

Some of these Turk tribes crossed the river Oxus and committed robbery and banditry in the interiors of Persia, Khorasan (between the Amu Darya [Oxus] and Syr Darya-rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan). These tribes are known as Turkan Ghez. Historians have found proof of their reaching up to Europe, Africa and Morocco.

### **Seljuks**

Among these same tribes was one tribe known as the Seljuk. Among the progeny of Turk bin Yafith this Turkistan tribe of Seljuk was, perhaps, the first to confess Islam and it gave birth to great and powerful kings like Tughril and Alp Arslan whose names spread into every nook and corner of the world.

## **Mongols And Tartars**

Before the Seljuks' embracing Islam and before their exodus to Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan), two new tribes emerged by the name of two full brothers and came to be known as Mongol and Tartar. About the time of the Seljuks converting to Islam and gaining fame, these two tribes were almost a nonentity. Gradually, the progeny of the Mongol and Tartar multiplied and both the tribes settled in different countries and separate territories under various chiefs.

It happened that among the Turks there was a person named Anjah Khan who had twin sons named Mongol and Tartar. They raised two separate peoples and they were called by these names, Mongol and Tartar. Mongol Khan's son was Qara Khan whose son was Arghun Khan who was the chief of his tribe. During his time, a man of his tribe invented a cart for carrying loads. Arghun Khan liked the carriage and entitled the inventor as 'Qangli.' Thus, a carriage or conveyance is called Qangli in Turkish. His progeny brought the Qangli tribe into being. Arghun Khan had a number of sons, and one of them was Tanghez Khan whose son was Mangli Khan and his son was named Eil Khan and his son was called Qeyan. Qeyan tribe emerged from the progeny of Qeyan Khan who was succeeded by his son, Ternur Tash whose son was Mangli Khan and his son was Yeldoz Khan Junea Bahadur who had a daughter named Alan Quwa. She was married to her cousin Dububayan and gave birth to two sons Yalkadai and Yakjudai. Alan Quwa's husband Dububayan was the ruler of his tribe. But he died leaving his two sons of tender age behind. The Mongol tribe entrusted Alan Quwa to be their chief after the demise of their chieftain Dububayan, the husband of Alan Quwa.

One night Alan Quwa went to bed. She had not yet slept when she noticed a light coming through the window of her room. This light entered her mouth. She got up in embarrassment and informed her mother and girl friends of this event. A few days later, she showed signs of pregnancy. When the news spread, the people rose to condemn her. But the queen Alan Quwa assembled the elders and

asked them to stay for a few days near her room to know the facts. They saw with their naked eyes that a light descended from the sky, entered the room of the retiring queen and then went back to the sky. Now they believed the statement of the queen and accepted her pregnancy as miraculous. On the completion of the pregnancy, Alan Quwa gave birth to triplet sons who were named Bugun Qaiqi, Yusfain Salji and Buzbakhar Khan. Thus, she became the mother of five sons, two from Dububayan and three without a father.<sup>1</sup> While Yalkadai and Yakujdai's progeny formed the Darlekin tribe, Bugun Qaiqi's progeny came to be known as Qaiqain tribe and those of Yusfain Salji's were called Saljeut; the progeny of Buz Bakberqan gained fame as Buzbakhar. Buzbakhar succeeded his mother Alan Quwa after her demise. He called himself the son of the son. This Buzbakhar produced Genghis Khan, Temur and many other famous Mongol tribes.

As mentioned above, there came a man named Anjah Khan from the progeny of Turk bin Yafith who had twin sons named Mongol Khan and Tartar Khan. The progeny of these two brothers came to be known as Mongol and Tartar. Their people chose two different areas to settle in. The Mongol tribe settled in China and Mongolia, while the Tartar tribe inhabited the area along the bank of the river Oxus and the region became known as Tartar or Turkistan. Since from the Keyanid royal family of Persia Faridun's son Tur ruled the territory in the past, it is also called Turan.

In the Keyani ruling dynasty of Persia, Afrasiyab attained great fame and found a prominent place in the *Shahnema* of Firdausi. The progeny of Afrasiyab lived in Turkistan or Turan and mixed with the Tartars. Since Turkistan was closer to Islamic territories, the tribe of Turks that first made progress into Islamic territory was the Tartars, which consisted of many sub-tribes. Among them was the tribe of the progeny of Afrasiyab. They were ambitious and respected and they

<sup>1</sup> This and same these Vevents and stories describe the old nations to magnifects their rulers and monorchs to link their relations with heavenly power, but these stories have no any base and ground.

were the beginning of a magnificent empire. The saying of Seljuk, the Great seems true when he said: "We are the progeny of Afrasiyab." A man named Seljuk in the suburbs of Bukhara was the first to confess Islam along with his tribe. The progeny of this Seljuk is called the Seljuk tribe. Seljuk had five sons. Among them, one was Israel and another one Michael (Mika'il). Sultan Mahmud, the Ghaznavid imprisoned Israel in the Fort of Kalinjar and Mahmud's son Sultan Mas'ud freed him then he rejoined his tribe. Mika'il's son was Sultan Tughril while another brother of Tughril named Chughri preg had a son who was Sultan Alp Arsalan Seljuk. If the Seljuk tribe is acknowledged to be the descendent of Afrasiyab, it was not totally Turkish in origin but also Persian Keyani. The Turks or Tartars living in Turkistan invaded Iran and Khurasan more than once. One among those tribes, the Seljuk's, laid the foundation of the Ottoman Empire, which came to be known as Turkish Ottoman.

### **The Word 'Mongol'**

It is a fact that the Mongol Tribe comes from Mongol Khan's progeny and every individual of that tribe is called Mongol. The short form of Mongol is Moghal. Some people consider 'Mongol' as the plural of Moghal, which is totally wrong.

### **Fara Tartar**

Mongol and Tartar would most frequently go to war because they had inhabited different territories and would compete for each other's land. The Keyani dynasty kept lending support to the Tartars until it ruled Turan and the Mongols remained subdued. During these battles, the Tartars captured Mongol women and children and from these women their offspring were called slave girl children and had no right to property. When such children became numerous and were married to their same class they all together made a separate people. Some historians believe, that such people were called Turkaman. It is because of the Tartar's dislike of the Mongols that they did not consider the children from Mongol women on par with their own. other than this tribal distinction The Mongol tribe and the Tartar tribe were actually the offspring of the same father.

## **Removal Of A Misunderstanding**

Some people mistake the Uzbeks for the Tartars, although the Uzbeks are a tribe raised from the progeny of Genghis Khan. This misunderstanding took route because the Mongol kings kept fighting with the Uzbek rulers. The Uzbeks those days were the kings of Turkistan and so some historians mistook them for the Tartars. However, the Ottoman Empire came from the Tartars. Mongol tribes had a number of branches like Qachaq, Ighor, Khali, Qachar, Afshar, Jala'ir, Arlat, Daghlal, Qantrat, Saldoz, Arghun, Qauchin, Tarkhani, Taghai, and Qaoshal.

It might have been clear by now that the word 'Turk' is a general term applied to all the tribes of the Mongols and the Tartars for both the Tartars and the Mongols are two branches of the Turkish tribe. Later on, the Tartars came to be called 'Turks' and the term 'Turk' was particularly applied to the Tartars. With the passage of time Turk and Mongol gained fame as two different peoples.

Being stronger than the Mongols, the Tartars came out of Turkistan and took Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan), Persia, Iraq, Syria, and Asia Minor by storm and spread over these territories leaving Turkistan behind. They had learned cultured manners and had become civilized by that time.

## **Genghis Khan**

### **Features Of The Mongol**

The features of the Mongols as described by the historians make them resemble the Turks to a great extent. They are known for their wide chest, flat face, small buttocks and wheatish complexion, quick action and sharp intellect. When they plan an endeavor, they never express their opinion and pounce upon their enemies catching them in a state of utter unawareness and do not allow them to retaliate. Their women fight along with men and never lag behind in the art of combat with their enemies. They eat flesh of all kinds and reject nothing. No spy

can intrude their land for he is easily recognized by his features and movements. They make no concession, in killing anybody and kill women, children, the old and young alike. When attacking their enemies, they ravage the entire population. It seems that they are governed by a sense of greed and they rather enjoy devastating the entire human world.

## **Administration Of The Mongols**

The territory ruled by the Mongols was divided into six provinces or parts, each governed by one person. All these governors were subordinates to one sovereign ruler who lived in Tamgach. One of these provinces or parts was ruled by Buzbakhar ibn Alan-quwa until the leadership came to the period of Tumna Khan ibn Bayasnaqar Khan. Tumna Khan had eleven sons out of which nine came from one mother and two were born as twins from another mother. He had named these two sons as Qabl Khan and Qachuli Bahadur.

## **Qachuli's Dream**

One night Qachuli Bahadur had a dream that a star emerged from the collar of his brother, Qabl Khan and rose to the sky and began to give light to the earth. Shortly after that, the star disappeared then another star appeared in the same spot. That too went out of sight after a little while giving place to the third one. Following the disappearance of the third star the fourth one appeared so brightly and forcefully that the entire world was illuminated. When this big star too went out of sight, a few small stars became visible and with this sight Qachuli Bahadur's eyes opened. He was still musing over the interpretation of the dream when he again fell asleep. In a fresh dream, he saw that this time one star came out of his own collar, rose to sky and began to shine in the sky. It was followed by the second and the third and thus seven stars in all, appeared. Following the seventh one appeared a very big and bright star, which illuminated the whole world. The disappearance of this big star was followed by the appearance of a number of small stars. Following this Qachuli woke up and he related both these dreams to his father.

## Interpretation Of Tumna Khan

Tumna Khan interpreted the dream by saying that a great king would emerge in the fourth generation from Qabl Khan and another great king in his (Qachuli Khan's) eighth generation and thus his dynasty would rule for long. Following this Tumna Khan counseled his both sons to keep united. He then wrote down a document and had his sons to sign it and then he handed it over to his treasurer to preserve it for the coming generations and he put his own signature on it before putting it under lock and key. The document stated that the empire and rulers would come from the progeny of Qabl Khan while the military leadership would remain with the progeny of Qachuli Bahadur. Accordingly, Qabl Khan came to the throne following the demise of Tumna Khan.

## Birth Of Genghis Khan

Maisuka Bahadur, the descendent of Qabl Khan had a son born on Dhul Qadah 20, 549 A.H. The same year the Great Khan of Mongolia, King Tamuchin died. For this reason Maisuka Bahadur named his son Tamuchin and who later gained fame by the name Genghis Khan. When Maisuka Bahadur died in 562 A.H., Tamuchin was only 13 when he came to the throne of his small kingdom. The people looked down upon him because he was a child and they showed signs of revolt.

## Dream Of Genghis Khan

Tamuchin dreamed that he had swords in his both hands and when he stretched his hands towards the east and the west, the tips of the swords touched both the horizons. When he narrated the dream to his mother, she was convinced that her son would shed blood and commit large-scale carnage. She also knew that, at the time of birth, Tamuchin's both fists were tightly closed. When the fists were opened, they had frozen blood in them. From this event, they also had inferred that the child would cause much bloodshed. The insurgence in Tamuchin's small kingdom reached a point that except for Amir Qaracha Bahadur from the progeny of Qachuli Bahadur, the entire progeny of Qachuli Bahadur also rose against Tamuchin. Tamuchin



sought help from Aurang Khan, the ruler of the bordering state and practically took refuge with him. Aurang Khan welcomed him wholeheartedly and looked after him like his own son. Shortly after that, Genghis Khan sprang into action against his benefactor and hid in a protected mountain pass along with his comrades. In a fierce encounter Aurang Khan was fatally injured by an arrow shot by Amir Qaracha and another chief, Yang Khan, killed him while he was escaping. Peace between Tamuchin and Yang Khan was the most expected outcome because Yang Khan had helped him by killing Aurang Khan. However, following this victory, Genghis Khan attracted a number of tribes around him and they, finding him brave and determined, offered their allegiance to him. With a large band of organized fighters, Genghis Khan led an attack on Yang Khan who was killed during the encounter and his vast territory fell to Genghis Khan. As a result of these victories, Tamuchin rose as a center of power and leadership among all the Mongol tribes. He then emerged as rival to the ruler of Mongolia and the power of the Great Khan himself.

## Change Of Name

Meanwhile, a man named Tankiri, who commanded respect from among the Mongols for his piety and devotion, came to Genghis Khan. He said to him, "I saw a red man in red garments mounted on red horse asking me to tell the son of Maisuka Bahadur to change his name from Tamuchin to Genghis Khan for God Almighty has decided to make you the emperor of many countries." Although Genghis Khan took him to be a liar, nevertheless, he began to be called Genghis Khan. In Turkish "Genghis" means emperor or is a synonym for emperor. A few days later, some dispute arose between Tankiri and a courtier of Genghis Khan. He caught Tankiri by his neck and knocked him so violently on the ground that he died on the spot.

Gradually, Genghis Khan brought all the tribes and Mongolia under his control and after the killing of the Great Khan in an encounter Genghis Khan was acknowledged as the Great Khan. Following this Genghis Khan turned to the Tartar tribes. The Tartar king found himself too weak to face Genghis Khan and bought peace by giving his daughter in marriage to Genghis Khan. In the wake of this peace

treaty, Tartar chiefs rose against their king and they sought Genghis's help. After large-scale bloodshed, the Tartar king poisoned himself to death and Genghis's territory expanded again. Genghis Khan was very brave and shrewd among the Mongols. His performance bears testimony to his wisdom and intelligence.

### **Religion Of The Mongols**

The faith and religion of the Mongols lie in the darkness of history. However, they had the concept of one Powerful Creator, they believed in God Almighty. They worshipped much in the way as the non-Aryan inhabitants of India did. A Prophet must have been sent to that region but the Mongols had sent him into oblivion with the passage of time along with his message. They had lost sense of right and wrong, lawful and unlawful. They ate what they found and did anything they liked. Due to the climatic effect and tribal feuds, some historians have written that their religion was simply killing men. They also worshipped stars and natural phenomena. They were not Magi even though they worshipped fire. Genghis Khan rose as a reformer in a people so low in moral decay and immersed in abject ignorance. He first established a mighty empire in a comparatively short time and then he took time to bring about reforms in the moral and social conditions of the Mongols.

### **Sultan Muhammad Khwarizm Shah**

During this time, Sultan Muhammad Khwarizm Shah had been in full control of Iran, Khurasan, Kabul, and Turkistan and was planning to annihilate Baghdad, and was undoubtedly considered the mightiest Muslim king on the Asian continent. When a dispute between the Abbasid Caliph Nasiruddin and Muhammad Khwarizm Shah took a serious turn, Khwarizm Shah decided to invade Baghdad and the Caliph sent Sheikh Shahabuddin Sahrwardy as his envoy to the court of Khwarizm Shah. He addressed the king and the courtiers and counseled them to hold back from plundering Baghdad. Khwarizm Shah said "Sheikh! You are a great admirer of the Abbasids, therefore you go back to Baghdad. I, myself, prefer the Alwis to the Abbasids and want to help the Alwis by devastating the Abbasid caliphate. I shall invade Baghdad by all means."

## **Curse Of Three Saints On Khwarizm**

Sheikh Shahabuddin Sahrwardy's mission failed to bring any fruit and he cursed Khwarizm Shah saying: "O Allah! Set some tyrants over him". When Khwarizm Shah led his army, he found the way closed with heavy snowfall and he had to postpone his campaign until the next year. One day, in a state of inebriation, he ordered to put Sheikh Majduddin to death and he was martyred. When he returned to consciousness, he expressed deep regret and sent blood money to Sheikh Najmuddin. He remarked: "The ransom for the martyred Sheikh is the head of yours and mine and thousands of Muslims will be killed in retaliation". They say that Khwarizm Shah was overtaken by calamity because he invited curses from Sheikh Shahabuddin Suhrawardy, Sheikh Majduddin and Sheikh Najmuddin.

## **Peace Steps Of Genghis Khan Towards Khawarizm**

When Genghis Khan established a mighty empire out of small states conquered by him, he thought it proper to establish peaceful friendly relations with his rival Sultan Khwarizm Shah for their borders were meeting each other. As a prelude to peace efforts, Genghis Khan sent a letter to Muhammad Khwarizm Shah through his emissaries, which contained, "I have conquered vast lands and I have under my banner such a large number of warring tricks that I have no desire to win any other country. Similarly, you are also in occupation of many countries and happen to be a great king. Thus it seems proper that we establish friendly relations between us and promise to live in peace and harmony so that each of us pay attention to human welfare and prosperity." He had further written in the letter, "I shall keep you dear like my own son." Having received the letter Khwarizm Shah evidently signed a peace document and showed the utmost courtesy to the emissaries but he disliked the last sentence which treated him as his son', which appeared somewhat degrading to him. According to the peace treaty, both the rulers agreed to free trading activities between the two empires and the traders enjoyed full freedom of crossing one another's borders. Genghis Khan, though an unbeliever, is praiseworthy for winning peace against the threat of a formidable

to Bukhara accompanied by his youngest son, Tolui Khan. Being informed of the Mongol invasion Khwarizm Shah dispatched a force of sixty thousand troops to the administrator of Anzar and thirty thousand cavaliers to Bukhara, he deployed two hundred and ten thousand men to keep Samarkand safe and sixty thousand fighters to fortify the Fort and tower and he himself left Samarkand for Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan).

### **Cowardice Of Khwarizm Shah**

The biggest mistake or an act of timidity on the part of Khwarizm Shah was his personal evasion of Genghis Khan. His departure to Khurasan was certainly discouraging for his army. Even more disheartening and injurious was his remark at the time of his departure that if Mongols dropped their whips into this trench it would get totally filled. This remark filled the force of Samarkand with great terror. Khwarizm Shah first reached Balkh and dispatched his wives and children and treasures to Mazandan. It is here that he held consultations with his nobles and courtiers about adopting the ways and means to combat the Mongols. Among the seven sons of Khwarizm Shah, one named Jalaluddin, having seen his father extremely terrified said, "You may go to Iraq with pleasure but confer on me the command of the army and I shall attack the enemy and Allah willing, I shall pitch my tents across the Oxus River. Moreover, let me guard Mawaraunnahr (between the Amu [Oxus] and Syr rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) and you take the responsibility of Iraq and Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan)". But Khwarizm Shah did not like the suggestion. He proceeded from Balkh to Herat. Meanwhile, the news of the seizure of Bukhara by the Mongols and the massacre of the whole population came to him as a great shock. He hurried to Nishapur and indulged in luxury.

In 617 A.H., a commander of Genghis Khan crossed the river Oxus at the head of thirty thousand troops. This news sent terror into the heart of Khwarizm Shah who dispatched his wives and children and treasure to Qarun Fort and he himself left for Asfarain. The Mongols felt utterly encouraged when they found Khwarizm Shah evading

engagement and running away from one place to another for his safety. With this in mind, they embarked on chasing him and surrounded Qarun Fort where he had kept his wives and children and his possessions. He then ran away to Asterabad and then to Amal.

### **Death Of Khwarizm Shah**

From Amal he fled to an Island and took refuge there. It was there that he got the soul shattering news that the Mongols had seized Qarun Fort his possessions, wives and children. He succumbed to the shock and was buried in the garments he was putting on. Next, the Mongols took the entire Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan) and Persia by storm and filled the territory with death and destruction. Only one of his sons named Jalaluddin, a brave, courageous and ambitious young man saved himself.

During this period, the Mongols conquered Bukhara and Samarkand and plunged the entire population into a river of blood. Genghis Khan himself crossed the river Oxus in Rabia al-Awwal 617 A.H. and massacred the population of Balkh and Herat. When the wives and children of Khwarizm Shah were produced before Genghis Khan, he took no pity and ordered them all to be put to death. This large-scale massacre also enveloped Nishapur, Mazandan, Amal, Rayy, Hamadan, Qum, Qazwin, Debal, Tabriz, Tiflis, and Maragheh where nobody, old or young, women or child, was spared. This scene of carnage and destruction filled the Muslim hearts with so much terror that an alone Mongol woman could ransack a house without any resistance. The people of Hamadan spared until then had mustered enough courage to assassinate a weak Mongol Governor bore the brunt of the Mongols' wrath in such a wild and violent way that no one has ever repeated such a brutal action ever since.

### **Jalaluddin Bin Khwarizm**

Soon after the death of his father Jalaluddin bin Khwarizm came to Tabriz from an island in the Caspian Sea. He took some brave friends with him. Although the Mongols attempted to arrest him, he tore apart their ranks and escaped along with his friends. He reached

Ghazni and received the support of a band of persons there. The nearby Mongol troops attacked his party but he fought them back and this was perhaps, the first defeat conceded by the Mongols at the hands of Jalaluddin. With this news Genghis Khan rushed to Bamyan where his grandson the son of his son Chogatai Khan was killed by an arrow. Genghis Khan grew so furious that he ordered the death of everyone. Even the pregnant women were not spared and their babies were taken out by splitting their wombs and killed. Following the defeat of the Mongol troops, Jalaluddin fortified his position and took the field against Genghis Khan. Unfortunately, some Generals changed sides during the engagement and went over to the Mongols. Jalaluddin was left with only seven hundred fighters. He didn't lose his courage and dashed against the mighty force of Genghis Khan. Jalaluddin showed exemplary bravery and spirit and he pushed back the Mongols wherever he turned against them. He frustrated the attempts of the Mongols and a large Mongol army always had to come to their rescue. However, Jalaluddin could not win the battle owing to dearth of fighters on his side. But he succeeded in establishing his prestige in the heart of Genghis Khan. He did not yield even when only one hundred fighters were left to fight under his command. In such an hour of crisis, he took off his coat of mail and threw it away, took his crown in his hand and plunged his horse into the river Indus. His companions followed suit. Even though Genghis Khan wanted to give chase to that valiant fighter and his followers it was not easy for his troops to face the surging waves of the deep river. Genghis Khan and his troops stopped at the bank of the river Indus and began to shower their arrows at the handful of fighters braving the dashing waves of the river. Many of them lost their lives bravely and only seven of them were left to stand by valiant Jalaluddin across the river. He put off his garments and spread them over the bushes to dry them and stuck his lance into the ground and put his crown on its and lay down under it to take a rest. He also put off the saddle of his horse and placed it in front of himself to dry out.

Genghis Khan was watching all this from the other bank with a feeling of surprise. He called his sons and commanders and said: "I have never seen the like of such a brave and courageous person. His companions are also matchless in bravery and crossing such a vast

and turbulent river is the work of brave men only. I am afraid, if this man remains alive, he will erase the name of the Mongols from the face of the earth. Let us work out a plan to do away with him as soon as possible". But, finding no way to fulfill his plan, Genghis Khan returned disappointed. This event took place in 620 A.H.

Following this Sultan Jalaluddin won some victories in the Sind province. His supporters and well wishers kept joining him here. A few days later, he crossed the river and reached Kirman and then to Shiraz. In the meantime, he inflicted defeats on the Fidai known as Batini and razed their forts to the ground save the Al a Mut Fort. The Fidai or Batini people were happy with the news of the Muslim massacre and destruction at the hands of the Mongols. Since they were themselves, sworn enemies of the Muslims like the Mongols they were not at all afraid of the Mongols. They had expanded their territories in the wake of the Muslim disaster. The uprooting of the Qaramatians should be reckoned among the deeds of Sultan Jalaluddin. It was the time when the Mongol flood was raging in the north. Sultan Jalaluddin proceeded to Baghdad to seek Caliph Nasiruddin's help and support so that the Mongol campaigns against the Islamic countries could be warded off. Since Nasiruddin hated Jalaluddin's father he deployed his nobles to stop Jalaluddin and drive him out of the territory. Facing this situation, Jalaluddin took the field and fought back the nobles. He then turned to Tabriz instead of Baghdad and moved to Girijistan after occupying Tabriz. He was greeted by the nobles with honor and they expressed their satisfaction over his arrival.

Now Sultan Jalaluddin gained strength and stability once again and when he came face to face with the Mongols near Isfahan, he repulsed the attack and drove them back. Now the whole country of Girijistan and its suburban territories came under the occupation of Jalaluddin. The Mongols attacked Jalaluddin once again with large-scale preparations. In view of the massive Mongol attack, Jalaluddin sent his emissaries to Baghdad and other Islamic countries to seek help but none rose to his help because they did not want to invite any risk to their countries by lending help to such a valiant fighter like Jalaluddin. At last he alone rose to face the Mongol attack but on account of being misinformed by his spies that the Mongol troops

were far away from him he was caught unaware by the Mongols in a midnight attack and lost the battle in spite of fighting gallantly. In a state of utter disappointment, he went away to an unknown place and remained untraceable for the rest of his life.

### **End Of Jalaluddin**

Two kinds of narratives have gained currency concerning his end. According to one, he took refuge in a hill where someone assassinated him for his costly garments and horse. Another one says that he joined the company of Muslim Sufis and saints and passed the rest of his life in long journeys, piety and prayers.

### **Genghis Khan's Interest In Islam**

Being relieved of the campaigns of Sultan Jalaluddin Khwarizm, Genghis Khan left his son, Chogatai Khan in Makran and came back to Mongolia in Dhul Hijjah 521 A.H. after an absence of seven years. In route to his native land and upon reaching Bukhara he ordered to produce before him the most learned Muslim scholar to learn from him the facts about Islam. Seven years of fighting and carnage had impressed upon him that although, the Muslims had become weak at the time, Islam was not an ordinary religion it had a magnificent system and high moral teachings. Qadi Ashraf and a learned Muslim scholar were produced before Genghis Khan. On inquiring about Islam, those two Muslim scholars first explained to him about faith in one God (Tawhid). Genghis Khan acknowledged the faith. Following this they put before him the creed of Prophethood which he readily accepted saying that God Almighty used to send His envoys for the guidance of mankind. He also accepted the prayer and fasting as obligatory. However, he held pilgrimage to Ka'bah as unnecessary. Qadi Ashraf declared Genghis Khan a Muslim but another scholar differed.

From Bukhara Genghis Khan came to Samarkand and showed much kindness to the Muslims there. During seven years of his absence from his homeland, he kept plundering and ravaging Muslims indiscriminately was now coming home but spiritually defeated and dominated by Islam. Genghis Khan's grandson Kublai Khan and Hulagu Khan were



then ten and nine years old respectively. Both of them came out to welcome Genghis Khan home, hunting a rabbit and a deer on the way. Since it was the first hunting affair of the boys Genghis Khan celebrated the occasion with a feast and festivities.

## **Nomination Of A Successor**

After everything being settled Genghis Khan assembled his sons, grandsons and commanders at a place where he said, "Since my last days are approaching and I have won a vast country for you all, I want you to choose someone as my successor." They all said in one voice, "We are perfectly obedient to you. We shall, therefore, obey anybody of your choice." Genghis Khan said, "If you leave the matter to me, I shall nominate Ogdai Khan as my successor. Now, it is your duty to obey him and carry out his orders." Following this he ordered to take out the document made out by Tumna Khan and signed by Qabl Khan and Qachuli Bahadur. He showed the document to everyone and had all of them sign it. He then declared that the deserts of Karakrum (in modern Turkmenistan) and Khazr (southeastern section of modern European Russia), Alani (Russia northeast of the Black Sea), Russia, and Bulgar (territory at the confluence of the Volga and Kama rivers) would be ruled by Juchi Khan. Mawaraunnahr (between the Amu [Oxus] and Syr rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan), Khwarizm (territories of present day Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), Kashgar (city in extreme western China), Badakhshan (in present day Afghanistan), Balkh, Ghazni and the territory up to Indus River would go to Chogatai Khan. Moreover, Qarachar Chogatai Khan and Amir Qachar would keep the same relation as stood between Qarachar and himself. Chogatai Khan would be the king and Amir Qachar his Commander-in-chief. Both would remain faithful and loyal to one another. He then made out a fresh document bearing the new settlement and put his own seal and signature on it. Amir Qarachar was the great grand son of Qachuli Bahadur. A part of Mongolia and a part of the command of Ogdai Khan would remain attached to Tolui Khan. He then ordered that all the brothers would consider their elder brother Ogdai Khan as their monarch and never think of turning away from him.

## **Death Of Genghis Khan**

Genghis Khan died in the Ramadan 624 A.H. at the age of 73 after a reign of 25 years. He was buried under a tree as per his will. In the first year, a thick forest grew around his grave until it became impassable and invisible and untraceable by the ensuing generations.

### **A Review Of The Genghis Khan's Reign**

Genghis Khan emerged among the Mongols as a very wise and far-sighted man. It was due to him alone that the unknown Mongol race achieved renown all over the world. He had established firm and appreciable principles of governance. He grew well aware of the basic fact that a savage and ignorant people like the Mongols must not be allowed to go without engagements otherwise they would perish by killing each other. On one hand, he taught the Mongols the virtues of unity and solidarity but worked out such laws and principles that would not leave the Mongol army out of action on the other. He also compiled a set of laws for the purpose, which came to be known as the "Torah of Genghis". The Mongols revered this book of statutes of Genghis Khan like a divinely religious book. The Torah of Genghis contains laws and principles for hunting as well, it was incumbent on Mongol kings to go hunting along with their troops when there were no campaigns to launch.

Along with the carnage and plunder, it is worth noticing that Genghis Khan would avoid the use of haughty words. In a letter to a king, he would generally say, "Obey me, otherwise, God Almighty knows, what will happen." He would never claim to have a strong and formidable army to crush the enemy. Similarly, he would never hold his huge army responsible for the victory. He would always say that his victory was only due to the Grace of God and He was the One who made him king. Moreover, he would not allow anybody to write about him words of acclaim and lofty praise. He would do ordinary work like ordinary soldiers. He covered long distances on horseback and had his soldiers to do it as well. He would so often say, "We should be adopted to hard labor and diligence. Our excellence and leadership lie therein."

Genghis Khan himself was tall, strong and stout. During battle, he was in the first row and dispersed the enemy ranks wherever he charged at them. The secret of his outstanding victories also lay in the fact that his sons were also mighty warriors and had been endowed with soldierly qualities and temper. Furthermore, he had done away with tribal feuds and rivalries and forged unity and accord among the Mongols.

He married five wives and every wife belonged to a different tribe. In this way, he won the confidence and support of all those tribes. One of the laws of his book of statutes entitled the "Torah of Genghis" was that, in case of the conquest of a new city, a large-scale massacre was a must, for it created deep terror in the hearts of the defeated people, never allowing them to gather courage to rise against the victor. Genghis Khan practiced it in all of his victories. It is an undeniable fact that in those days, no ruler was above the danger of revolt and murder and such insurgencies and uprisings caused untold miseries and sufferings to the population at large. The revolts of the Persians, Shiites and Ubaidites never ceased to occur. When Genghis Khan was acquainted with these ways and practices throughout the conquered territories, he used this device to create awe and fear in his subjects and it paid him dividends.

The Mongols of that time had conquered the entire Asian continent and some parts of Europe except Iraq, Arabia and India. The Islamic states suffered most at the hands of the Mongols and their swords killed large numbers of Muslims. At times, it appeared that Islam would go out of existence but Allah Almighty saved His Religion and only the deviated Muslims were overtaken by the calamity. With the passage of time, the anti-Islamic force of the Mongols surrendered to the mighty moral and spiritual forces of Islam. The swords, which were used to wipe out all traces of Islam, were now being used to guard it. When Christianity made an attempt to turn the Mongols might and magnificence towards itself the Mongols found nothing in it to attract an ambitious and adventurous people. Mongols were, in truth, like a clean slate concerning religion and faith and had nothing against others. Allah Almighty had taken the Mongols out of the mountains to make a victorious entry into Asia

and to become civilized and enlightened. This is a splendid sign of the truth of Islam that it has the power to cast its impact both on the victor and the vanquished.

## **Ogdai Khan**

After the demise of Genghis Khan his elder son, Ogdai Khan succeeded him while his brothers took charge of their respective territories as allotted by Genghis Khan. Two years later, Ogdai Khan invited his brother to join him in a feast and other festivities. At the end of the celebrations, Ogdai Khan said addressing his brothers, "I now abdicate the throne and you all are at liberty to choose someone else as your Great Khan". But Chogatai Khan and the other brothers and commanders insisted on him to continue as emperor. They seated him on the throne and worshipped the sun according to their practice. Hatu Khan, the son of Juchi Khan and grandson, Guyuk Khan and Mungku Khan, the sons of Tolui Khan were commissioned to invade Russia, Cherkessia (southwestern Russia) and Belgrade. These princes conquered all those countries after fighting long campaigns over seven years. The commander Arghun was then entrusted the duty of rehabilitating the cities of Khurasan, which were once devastated by the Mongols.

Ogdai Khan, the son of Genghis Khan was very sober and gentle. He paid heed to welfare programs and developmental plans for his subjects at large. He was particularly very sympathetic to the Muslims. He held them in high esteem and paid them special attention. Taking a bath by diving into the water was a major crime according to the Mongol law. Ogdai Khan and Chogatai Khan were going together somewhere. They noticed a Muslim having bath in a river. Chogatai Khan issued an order to have him executed. Ogdai Khan immediately ordered to arrest the Muslim and have him executed in full view of the public. Ogdai Khan then met the Muslim in private and advised him to say that he had a purse full of gold coins which he wanted to hide under the water for fear of robbers and that was his sole purpose for entering the river. Ogdai Khan then had a purse dropped into the river at the spot where the Muslim was bathing. When the accused Muslim was brought for execution, he

advanced the same argument as was instructed by Ogdai Khan. Following his statement, men were sent in search of the purse and it was found. In this way, the truth of the statement of the Muslim was established and Ogdai Khan set the Muslim free along with the purse and with a few others by way of reward for his truthfulness.

Once a certain person came to Ogdai Khan and said, "Last night I saw Genghis Khan in dream. He told me to convey to Ogdai Khan my utmost desire that the Muslims must be wiped off of the surface of the earth without any delay." Ogdai Khan said to him, "Do you know the language of the Mongols?" He said, "I know only Persian and can speak and understand this language alone." Thereupon Ogdai Khan said, "Genghis Khan knew the Mongol language and could neither speak nor understand Persian. How did you know what he said?" Saying this Ogdai Khan ordered that he be killed for he was a liar, and he was put to death on the spot.

It was a common opinion about Ogdai Khan that, even though he had not confessed Islam openly he had secretly embraced it by acknowledging its power and virtues. His capital was Karakorum where he had stored the gems and jewels and other possessions they had collected as a result of their pillaging and plundering all over the world. But the proverbial generosity of Ogdai Khan attracted men from far off places like Khurasan and Syria to Karakorum who would come back rich and prosperous. The atrocities and bloodshed from which the father had collected phenomenal wealth the son distributed it among the people with exemplary generosity, kindness and sympathy. In consequence of this the awe and terror of the inhuman treatment and wanton behavior of the Mongols turned into love for Ogdai Khan. Even though Genghis Khan laid the foundation of the Mongol Empire, it was, in truth, Ogdai Khan who lent stability and solidity to it.

### **Guyuk Khan**

When the end of Ogdai Khan came his son, Guyuk Khan was far away from Karakorum. Thus, in accordance with the Mongol practice, they gave the throne to Turkina the widow of Ogdai Khan so that the empire could be spared any trouble. When Guyuk Khan

returned to Karakorum, he spoke nothing about the throne following the Mongol practice and the Torah of Genghis and passed his days like a common person. After sometime Turkina sent invitations to the kings and rulers all over the world to attend a great occasion. The Kings of Khurasan, Persia, Kipchak, Rome, Baghdad, and Syria sent their ambassadors as their representatives. The Caliph of Baghdad sent his Chief Qadi Fakhruddin and Amir Arghun came from Khurasan, while Sultan Ruknuddin Seljuk came from the Seljuk Sultanate of Rome (modern Turkey), Shahabuddin and Shams from Ala-Mut and Qahistan and envoys from the European kings. Two thousand camps were pitched for the Muslim guests; this let us know the scale of the celebration and the number of visitors and participants. Now the question of choosing a worthy man for the throne was raised. All men present on the occasion chose Guyuk Khan for the job. Mungku Khan, the son of Tolui Khan caught hold of the hand of Guyuk Khan, made him sit on the throne and put the crown on his head. Guyuk Khan's wife was a Christian woman; therefore, Christian representatives received special attention and honor. However, the representatives of the Batiniyah sect were turned out with disgrace.

He showed hospitality to the Muslims too. But the Christians made an all out attempt to make Guyuk Khan hate the Muslims. At last, they succeeded in causing Guyuk Khan to write an edict enjoining all the commanders to rise as one man to wipe out the Muslims from the face of the earth. When he came out after putting his signature and seal on the order, his hunting dogs charged at him and chewed his testicles. Although Guyuk Khan remained alive, he was seriously injured and from that day on the Christians were terrified and they could not muster courage to oppose the Muslims.

### **Death Of Guyuk Khan**

A short time later Guyuk Khan went to Samarkand and died there. When Ogdai Khan was alive, his younger brother and the youngest son of Genghis Khan, Tolui Khan lived with him and was the commander of his army. Tolui Khan loved Ogdai Khan very much. Once Ogdai Khan fell ill, Tolui Khan prayed to God to either heal him

or give him death instead of Ogdai. From that time, Ogdai Khan began to recover and Tolui Khan's health started deteriorating. At last, Ogdai Khan was completely cured and Tolui Khan passed away. Tolui Khan left his four sons behind namely, Mungku Khan, Kublai Khan, Arigh Boke and Hulagu Khan. Ogdai Khan loved them most. Guyuk Khan also showed his kindness to them all. After the demise of Guyuk Khan, Batu Khan, son of Juchi Khan, the king of Qabchag was considered strong and wise. The majority of them turned to Batu Khan for the choice of the Great Khan however, some of them opposed his right to choose but the choice of Batu Khan prevailed and Mungku Khan came to the throne with a broad consensus.

### **Mungku Khan**

Mungku Khan entrusted the reign of Khitai (northern China) to his brother Kublai Khan and sent another brother Hulagu Khan towards Persia at the head of a huge army. Mungku Khan came to the throne in 648 A.H. and treated the Muslims kindly and favorably.

### **Death Of Mungku Khan**

Mungku Khan died in 655 A.H. after reigning for 7 years. A year before his death Mungku Khan wrote to the Chinese king to obey him and invaded China upon his refusal.

### **Kublai Khan**

Mungku Khan died in Chankad during the same journey and his brother Kublai Khan, who had accompanied Mungku Khan on the journey was enthroned in Chankad right away. On receipt of this news, Arigh Boke advanced his claim on the throne at Karakorum and declared himself the king of the Mongols. When Kublai Khan turned to him, Arigh Boke came out to meet him with his army. The two brothers faced each other at Kuluran and Arigh Boke was defeated after a fierce battle. But he escaped unhurt. Kublai Khan entered Karakorum and sat on the throne. Arigh Boke collected troops in Khitai (northern China) and rose again to fight against his brother but tasted defeated once again and fled to Kashgar (city in western China)

and attacked Kublai Khan again. In short, fighting between the two brothers spread over a period of four years. At last, Arigh Boke was arrested and put in prison where he breathed his last.

After coming to throne in 655 A.H. Kublai Khan sent orders to Hulagu Khan that he was responsible for looking after the territory from across the Oxus river to Syria as the ruler. As a consequence of long battles between Arigh Boke and Kublai Khan, the central rule of the Mongols and awe of the Karakorum court was diminished to a great extent and the heads of a number of provinces threw off the burden of the central rule and declared their sovereignty. These events happened at a time when a number of princes of the Genghis Khan dynasty had embraced Islam and Islam was spreading among the Mongols.

Getting rid of Arigh Boke, Kublai Khan invaded China and won the whole of China after a protracted battle. He then laid the foundation of a new city named Ta Tu (later Pei-p'ing corrupted to Peking by westerners and now known as Beijing) and shifted his capital from Karakorum to this city and forced Siam, Burma, and Japan to pay tribute.

Kublai Khan appointed four ministers belonging to four different religions one among them being a Muslim named Amir Ahmad Banakti. All other Mongol rulers acknowledged the sovereignty of Kublai Khan. At this time, the Mongol rule spread from China to Europe. Muslim rule was then weak and unimpressive. The Christians, Magians and Jews, after getting access to the Mongol court, made all out efforts to instigate the ruler against the Muslims. Abaq Khan, the son of Hulagu Khan once wrote to Kublai Khan from Khurasan: "The Jews and the Magians have informed me that the Qur'an, the Book of the Muslims enjoins upon them to kill the polytheists wherever they find them. What's your opinion about this injunction? In case, the Muslims are bound by their faith to kill us without discrimination their very existence is a menace to our own." Kublai called some Muslim religious scholars and sought their opinion saying "Does your Qur'an contain such an injunction?" "Yes there is such an order in the Qur'an." Thereupon Kublai Khan said, "Why don't you kill us?" They said, "It is because we don't have power to do so. We shall start killing you when we get such a power."



At this Kublai Khan said, "Since we have such a power at present, we should kill you." Saying this he had the Muslim scholars killed and issued orders to kill the Muslims wherever they were found. Having heard this Badruddin Baihagi and Hamiduddin Samarkandi reached the court of Kublai Khan and asked the reason behind his orders for the mass killing of the Muslims. Kublai Khan said to them, "What do you mean by 'kill the idol worshippers.'" Both the scholars explained, "Allah Almighty had commanded His Prophet and his Companions to kill the idol-worshippers because they had thirst for Muslim blood. It was just a safety device. But this order doesn't apply to you for you hold God Almighty as one and write the name of God at the head of your orders and edicts." Hearing this Kublai Khan grew happy and abrogated his first order.

This event proves beyond doubt that Mongols had a very sensitive feeling regarding religion. But they kept coming close to Islam with mental development and cultural progress and all efforts to present a distorted view of Islam fell flat on the ground.

## **Death Of Kublai Khan**

Kublai Khan died at 73 after reigning for 35 years and was succeeded by his grandson, Temur Khan who came to the throne in China. During his reign, the public administration suffered a setback and complete disorder. Temur the Great Khan died in 700 A.H. Although a number of rulers succeeded him one after another following the final departure of Temur Khan, it was more a formality than actual rule. The Mongol empire had, in fact, ceased to exist from the death of Temur Khan.

## **Hulagu Khan**

When Mungku Khan took charge of the Mongol empire in Karakorum, he received the complaint that Batiniyah Ismaili's mischief had crossed all limits and they hated everyone holding a high position like kings, commanders, high officials and men in power. They passed sleepless nights owing to their acts of murder and terror. Along with this he also got the news that the Caliph of Baghdad, although considered a weak ruler, could prove formidable to the Mongols by

virtue of his glory and magnificence, if he rose to face the challenge. Mungku Khan sent his brother Hulagu Khan at the head of a huge army of one hundred and twenty thousand men and instructed him not to launch an attack if the Caliph meant peace but to fight him to the finish in case he showed signs of belligerency. Moreover, he was asked to annihilate the Ismailites and their ruler by attacking the Ala-Mut Fort. Amir Ichol, son of Amir Qarachar was ordered to accompany the army as commander.

Hulagu Khan reached Khurasan and Iran in 651 A.H. The Rulers of Azerbaijan, Shirvan (part of modern day Azerbaijan) and Gijistan presented themselves before Hulagu Khan and offered their allegiance to him. Arghun Aga Obrat proceeded from Khurasan to meet Mungku Khan. Hulagu Khan arrived in Khurasan and, being acquainted with the prevailing situation, paid attention to the disturbances created by the atheist Ismailites and went on seizing their forts one by one. Ala Mut Fort fell in Dhul Qadah 656 A.H. Ismailite ruler, Shah Ruknuddin Khurshah was arrested and produced before Hulagu Khan, who sent him to Mungku Khan in Karakorum with the instruction that he should be done away with on the way. His order was implemented and Ruknuddin's wife, children and relatives were all put to death. However, Khawaja Nasiruddin Tusi who was one of the courtiers of Khurshah received a position as a courtier of Hulagu Khan by virtue of his flattery and cleverness. All the treasures and buried possessions of the Ismailites were plundered by the Mongols and their reign met its doom.

Shortly after that, Nasiruddin Tusi persuaded Hulagu Khan to invade Baghdad and the Minister of the Caliph of Baghdad, Algarni conspired with Hulagu Khan through Nasiruddin, which resulted in the devastation of Baghdad. Hulagu returned from Baghdad to his capital Maragheh laden with gems and jewels and immense valuables and slave-girls and sent all this to Mungku Khan in Karakorum. Atabak S'ad bin Abu Bakr, the ruler of Persia, Badruddin Lulu, the ruler of Mosul, and Sultan Azizuddin Seljuk, the ruler of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rome (modern Turkey) appeared before Hulagu and offered their allegiance. In Ramadan 657 A.H. Hulagu sent some renowned Generals at the head of an army as vanguards towards Syria. He then

moved ahead conquering Nasibain, Harran, and Halab massacring people and reached Damascus and won Damascus in the same way. He then put Syria under his governor Kasuqa and turned towards Khurasan. Shortly after that, the Egyptian army invaded Syria and fought back the Mongol troops. Hulagu was enraged and decided to restore Syria but the death of Mungku Khan stopped him. During the same time discord began between Hulagu and Berke Khan the son of Juchi Khan the ruler of the Kipchak Khanate (the Golden Horde).

It is said that a close relative of Berke Khan lived with Hulagu Khan. Berke who was killed by Hulaqu. Khan became infuriated and remarked, "Hulagu Khan killed the Caliph of Baghdad and massacred a large number of Muslims without any rhyme or reason. I shall avenge him for all his crimes." He then dispatched an army against him and Hulagu's army was defeated. However, the fight continued until at last, Hulagu Khan himself led his army against Berke Khan in 661 A.H. and won the battle. Shortly after that, Berke Khan launched a massive attack on Hulagu Khan and gave him a decisive defeat. This ignominious defeat left Hulagu Khan dejected and frustrated.

### **Hulagu Khan's Death**

After losing the battle to Berke Khan, Hulagu Khan sent a General to Syria to bring tribes of the Kara Tartar to be dispatched against Berke Khan. The General went to Syria and winning the Kara Tatar tribes to his side, revolted against Hulagu Khan. When Hulagu received this shocking news in Maragheh, his capital, he suffered such a deep frustration that he died in 663 A.H. in a state of coma, at the age of 48 years and after reigning for 8 years. In Maragheh, he set up a planetarium with the help of Nasiruddin Tusi and other scientists. He gave the reign of Iraq and Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan) to his son Abagha Khan and Azerbaijan to his second son. Dayar-e-Bakr and Dayar-e-Rabi'a he gave to Saldoz, the ruler of Turan and appointed Khawaja Shamsuddin Muhammad Jawini as his Minister. Ata al-Mulk Alauddin, the son of Shamsuddin Jawini was made the ruler of Baghdad. Hulagu Khan was buried in a strange manner according to the Mongol practice. Instead of a normal grave, a grave room was made ready for burial. After putting the dead body in the grave room, a few young girls,

wearing costly garments and ornaments, were brought to the grave room to serve the dead man and be his companion in solitude. Following this, the opening of the grave room was firmly closed leaving the beautiful young girls to die with the dead man. Sultan Balban ruled over India during the reign of Hulagu Khan. Although he used to keep himself acquainted with the events and affairs taking place under Balban he never attacked India. Although some Mongol Generals invaded India from time to time the credit goes to their leaders who repulsed their attacks every time. At a time when the entire world of Islam was overtaken by disturbances and disruptions, India was one country where the Islamic rule was strong and mighty and so this country remained safe from the Mongol's expansionist designs.

### **Abagha Khan**

Shortly after the death of Hulagu Khan, the nobles and courtiers convened a meeting of the Mongol celebrities and chose Hulagu Khan's son Abagha Khan for the throne. However, Abagha Khan refused the throne in the absence of permission from the Mongol Emperor Kublai Khan. He yielded to the insistence of the Mongol court and came to the throne on Ramadan 2, 663 A.H. He lavished rewards on Mongol Generals and soldiers and made his brother Bashmut the ruler of Shirvan (part of modern day Azerbaijan), Mazandaran (historic region of northern Iran, bordering the Caspian Sea on the north) and Khurasan to his next brother, Teshen. Rome (modern day Turkey) was given to Tuhan Bahadur, the son of Sonjak. The territories near Rome (modern day Turkey) were given to Turan, the son of Jalair Darlak. Arghun Aga was given the duties of Finance and Khawaja Shamsuddin was made Prime Minister and Arghun Khan was appointed the instructor of his son Mehrtaq Nawyan Birlas.

Abagha Khan resumed fighting against Berke Khan who died during these battles. The Generals and relatives of the Mongol rulers targeted Abagha Khan on all sides. Baraq Khan Chogatai captured Khurasan and Abagha Khan defeated him after a series of fights and, gradually, re-established his rule. Attempts to expand to the southwest failed and every time the Mongol army clashed with the Egyptian troops, it tasted defeat.

## **Abagha Khan's Death**

Abagha Khan died in 680 A.H. He was a great devotee of Sheikh S'adi Shirazi and Jalaluddin Rumi and would often attend them. His son, Nakudar Aghlan, succeeded him.

## **Nakudar Aghlan**

Nakudar Aghlan called Ahmad Khan had embraced Islam during the time of his father. He adopted the appellation of Ahmad Khan shortly after coming to throne and appointed Sheikh Kamaluddin Abdur Rahman al-Rafe'i as his Minister. Sultan Ahmed provided all facilities for the Muslims and conferred upon them high posts. He obliterated the blasphemous rites and practices of the Mongols and made an all out effort to propagate Islam. With the efforts of Ahmad Khan, other Mongols also came to the fold of Islam. With an eye to the harm caused to Mongol's glory and leadership at the hands of Ahmad Khan, as a Muslim ruler, his brother Arghun Khan started to plot a revolt against him.

## **Martyrdom Of Nakudar Aghlan**

Arghun Khan, the son of Abagha Khan brought other courtiers and Generals around to his view and revolted against Ahmad Khan. Sultan Ahmad's army also joined hands with the conspirators, with the result Sultan Ahmad Khan was arrested and martyred after a reign of 3 years. This event took place in 683 A.H.

## **Arghun Khan**

Arghun Khan came to throne and appointed S'adullah, a Jew as his Prime Minister and issued orders, at the instance of his Prime Minister to kill Muslim religious scholars in every city under his rule. In the wake of this order, thousands of Muslim scholars were put to death. Arghun was deeply devoted to a Hindu ascetic and received from him a herbal medicine to extend his age, but it resulted in producing one disease after another and he succumbed to disease in 690 A.H.

## **Gaykhatu Khan**

Arghun Khan (son of Abagha Khan) was succeeded by his brother Gaykhatu Khan. The first use of currency notes in 693 A.H. is a notable event of his reign. The Mongols called it "Yut." It was a small piece of paper bearing Testimony of Faith (There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger) on its both sides and the name of the king and the value thereof were written below. This created a great outcry throughout the country and caused a bad effect on trade and commerce. The people looked upon the piece of paper with amazement and remarked: "How can we accept this piece of paper instead of gold coin." Thus, due to strong opposition from his subjects, Gaykhatu Khan discontinued its circulation.

## **Gaykhatu Khan's Martyrdom**

Mongol commanders martyred this king too for his attachment to Islam.

## **Baydu Khan**

Baydu Khan, the cousin of Gaykhatu Khan succeeded him. He was the grandson of Hulagu Khan. Arghun Aga Awirat, who ruled over Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan) for about 30 years on behalf of the Mongol kings, died in 696 A. H. Prior to his death his son Amir Nawruz Beg went to Prince Ghazan Khan, son of Arghun Khan, grandson of Abagha Khan, joined his court and persuaded him to accept Islam. Ghazan Khan was then the Governor of Khurasan. Since Ghazan Khan, considered himself the rightful heir to the throne it became the point of discord between Baydu Khan and Ghazan Khan. Led and persuaded by Nawruz Beg, Ghazan Khan called for Sadraddin Hamwi and Ghazan Khan embraced Islam at his hand; his Islamic name was Mahmud Khan. In the wake of his acceptance of Islam, many other Mongol Commanders became Muslim. Following this, the gulf of differences between Baydu Khan and Sultan Mahmud (Ghazan Khan) widened so much that it resulted in fighting and killing.

## **Assassination Of Baydu Khan**

Sultan Mahmud Khan won the battle and had Baydu Khan assassinated and he came to the throne in 694 A.H.

## **Mahmud Khan Ghazan Khan**

Sultan Mahmud Ghazan Khan was the son of Arghun Khan and the grandson of Abagha Khan. Having come to throne, Mahmud Khan appointed Nawruz Beg as his Minister and Commander and engraved *Kalimah-e-Taiyabah* on the coins and ordered to write "Allah, the Most High" at the head of the Seal and on all edicts. A short time later, he sent Nawruz Beg to Khurasan as the Governor. Two Mongol commanders, named Istimur and Arsalan agreed on a plan to do away with Sultan Mahmud Khan and Nawruz Beg and the same date was fixed for the event by each of them. However, their plan failed and one was killed by Sultan Mahmud Khan and another by Nawruz Beg. Following this some commanders and ministers conspired to turn the king against Nawruz Beg by inventing stories about Nawruz Beg's secret plans to revolt against him. As a result of constant conspiratorial campaigns, Sultan Mahmud brought about the death and destruction of Nawruz Beg and his family members. The Minister, Khawaja Sadruddin also met his doom at the hands of the same conspirators and Khawaja Rashid uddin took his place. The event took place in 699 A.H.

When the situation returned to normal, Sultan Mahmud Ghazan Khan wrote to his counterpart in Egypt that since his ancestors had conquered Syria and it remained occupied by his ancestors and the Egyptian army had usurped it, it was better to vacate the territory and offer allegiance to him. But the Egyptian reply was rather degrading. Moreover, the Egyptians came out and invaded some of the territories under the occupation of Sultan Mahmud Ghazan. The Egyptian troops even desecrated mosques and massacred the Muslims indiscriminately. Sultan Mahmud Khan invaded Syria at the head of 90 thousand troops in 699 A.H. The Egyptian king also came out to combat the Mongols. The battle broke out in Hims and the result was a defeat for the Egyptians. Mahmud Khan then occupied Syria and Damascus and appointed his viceroys to govern them. The Egyptian king invaded

Syria once again and the Mongol commanders in Syria fought valiantly but conceded defeat and Taitaq, the Mongol commander was arrested while fighting gallantly. Hearing this Mahmud Khan resolved to invade Syria once again. However, news came to him that Juchi's offspring ruling over Kipchak Khanate (the Golden Horde) had staked their claim to Persia and Khurasan. Sultan Mahmud Khan changed his mind and he never had the opportunity again to turn towards Syria.

### **Death Of Mahmud Ghazan Khan**

Sultan Mahmud Ghazan died in 703 A.H. During the tenure of this king Islam flourished among the Mongols and the Muslims were largely benefited from his favor. On the eve of his death, he made a will that he would be succeeded by his brother Oljeitu, known as Muhammad Khudabanda.

### **Sultan Muhammad Khudabanda Oljeitu**

He came to the throne in Dhul Hijjah, 703 A.H. and adopted "Muhammad Khudabanda" as his appellation. All the great commanders greeted him on the eve of his enthronement. Soon after becoming the king, he ordered to enforce Islamic codes all over the country and to obliterate all anti-Islamic practices. His rule gained quick popularity and he was acknowledged as a sovereign ruler from Russia, Khwarizm (territories of present day Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), Belgrade, Seljuk Sultanate of Rome, Syria to Karakorum, Sind and Iraq.

### **His Death**

The noble and pious king breathed his last on the night of Eid-ul-Fitr, 716 A.H. after reigning for 13 years. He had founded a new city named Sultania, made it his capital and was buried in the same city. His son Abu Sayeed Bahadur succeeded him.

### **Abu Sayeed Bahadur Khan**

Abu Sayeed was 14 at the time of his enthronement. Although feuds erupted among the Mongol commanders, they controlled their differences knowing the consequences. Sultan Abu Sayeed appointed



commander Chaupan as his Prime Minister and enhanced his power and position. Commander Hasan Jalair, the son of Commander Chaupan was married to a woman named Baghdad Khatun. Sultan Abu Sayeed fell in love with this woman and he wanted her to be divorced by commander Hasan. But commander Chaupan did not agree to this and their differences took such a turn that Commander Chaupan rose in revolt and occupied Khurasan. Herat was then ruled over by Chogatai dynasty and they had a strong hatred against the Hulagu dynasty. However, one of the Chogatai commanders named Turma Shirin Khan was brought around to Commander Chaupan's view and gave his active support. Sultan Abu Sayeed Bahadur Khan prepared for a fight, and after a series of encounters, Commander Chaupan was arrested and assassinated. His son, Commander Hasan Jalair divorced Baghdad Khatun and gave Sultan Abu Sayeed an opportunity to marry her.

### **Abu Sayeed's Death**

Uzbek Khan, the king of Kipchak Khanate (the Golden Horde) invaded Persia with a huge army. Sultan Abu Sayeed also proceeded to take on the enemy. But he fell ill at Shirvan (part of modern day Azerbaijan) because of the unfavorable climate and succumbed to it on Rabia al-Awwal 13, 736 A.H. Since he was without children, anarchy and troubles of the worst nature overtook his kingdom.

### **Arpa Khan**

Arpa Khan came to the throne with the common consent of the Mongol commanders. He proclaimed that he needed no comforts and luxuries in life and preferred a mace to a golden waistband, a felt cap to a jeweled crown. Since he was about to face Uzbek Khan's force, Arpa Khan was bent on making preparations courageously and wisely and he deployed troops to stop the invaders. Meanwhile, Uzbek Khan received shocking news of an emerging insurgency in the Kipchak Khanate (the Golden Horde). He left the capital to put down the revolt. Then Amir Ali rose up against Arpa Khan. Amir Ali succeeded in his attempt particularly because Arpa Khan had started killing the offspring of Hulagu Khan wherever he found them. Most of the commanders grew disheartened with these new developments. Two different camps developed one supporting Arpa Khan and one supporting Amir Ali.

## **Assassination Of Arpa Khan**

The two forces faced one another in 736 A.H. It resulted in the arrest and assassination of Arpa Khan. After achieving success, Amir Ali seated Musa Khan, the son of Baydu Khan and the great-grandson of Hulagu Khan, on the throne.

## **Musa Khan**

With the enthronement of Musa Khan, the power and influence of Amir Ali Aviran and other Avirat commanders took firm root and flourished. Amir Hasan, the Governor of Rome (modern day Turkey), invaded Musa Khan, fought against him and killed Amir Ali. Defeated and frustrated Musa Khan was succeeded by Sultan Muhammad Khan, the son of Qatlaq Khan the descendant of Hulagu Khan. His rule was also weak like that of Musa Khan. A few others succeeded each other from the Hulagu dynasty but only in name. By 744 A.H., Hulagu Khan's descendants ceased to rule and the countries conquered by Hulagu Khan came to be ruled by a number of other sovereign rulers.

## **Progency Of Juchi Khan**

Juchi Khan was the eldest son of Genghis Khan. Soon after conquering Khwarizm (territories of present day Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), Juchi Khan won Kipchak Khanate (the Golden Horde) and settled there. The other sons of Genghis Khan were not sympathetic to Juchi Khan. Like him, his country also fell far off from the center of Mongol authority. Most of Juchi Khan's descendants were called Uzbek. Juchi Khan expired during the lifetime of Genghis Khan, who then entrusted his vast territory to his son Batu Khan who was eldest among Juchi Khan's seven sons.

## **Batu Khan**

When Batu Khan marched from Kipchak to invade Khazr and Russia,, Ogdai Khan, the son of Genghis Khan ordered his son Guyuk Khan, Tolui Khan, the son of Mungku Khan and a son of Chogatai Khan to

accompany Batu Khan on his mission. Batu Khan first conquered the whole of Russia and attacked Moscow and won it before invading Poland and occupying it. Being informed of the advancing troops of Batu Khan, the European powers concentrated their army in a vast field to collectively combat their common enemy. Batu Khan had a large number of Muslims as well in his army. When Batu Khan came to know that the Christians had collected troops several times more than the Mongol army had, he ordered the Muslim section to assemble at a place to invoke victory. The Battle broke out thereafter and the Christians were ignominiously defeated, and Batu Khan conquered the whole of Hungary. Batu Khan founded a new city in Europe and named it Sarai (near modern day Volgograd). The rest of Batu Khan's life passed in conquering and administering European territories and he died in 654 A.H.

### **Berke Khan**

His brother Berke Khan succeeded Batu Khan. Batu Khan was a Muslim in name like Genghis Khan but Berke Khan openly embraced Islam, with the result that the Muslims enjoyed peace and safety from the Mongols' excesses during his tenure. Hulagu Khan killed a relative of Berke Khan, he was terribly enraged at this action, and Berke Khan sent Buga Khan at the head of thirty thousand troops to invade Hulagu's country. Hulagu also sent a commander to face the enemy, but he was defeated. Hulagu Khan's army was defeated at first but Berke Khan's forces were later repulsed.

Thirty persons among the progeny of Juchi Khan came to the throne one after the other. Berke Khan was succeeded by his son Mungku Temur Khan who was later succeeded by Tugtai Khan. A fierce battle was fought between Tugtai Khan and Tugai Khan and Tugtai Khan was victorious and embarked on a peaceful administration. He then wrote to Ghazan Khan that Hulagu Khan and his descendants had annexed Azerbaijan within their country although, according to the allotment of Genghis Khan, Juchi Khan's offspring had a right to the territory. It is therefore proper for this territory to be handed over to him (Tugtai) otherwise; he had the power to capture it by force. Ghazan Khan replied in the negative and expressed his readiness to

take on the invaders. But the situation was saved as Tugtai Khan changed his mind.

Tugtai Khan was succeeded by his son, Tughril Khan and his son, Uzbek Khan came to the throne after his demise. Uzbek Khan is renown as the founder of the Uzbek tribe, which was named after him. Uzbek Khan had a large number of descendants and all of them were known as Uzbek. The Uzbeks invaded Sultan Abu Sayeed Bahadur Khan, the king of Persia in 718 A.H.; they plundered some of the Persian area and returned. Uzbek Khan launched another attack on Persia in 735 A.H. Sultan Abu Sayeed came out to face the invading force but died on the way and Arpa Khan came to the throne. Uzbek Khan abandoned his campaign and returned and died after a long reign.

Jani Beg Khan Uzbek then came to the throne. The progeny of Juchi Khan, who as we have stated are known as Uzbek broke away from the central rule and set up their own separate kingdoms. Jani Beg Khan was succeeded by his son Baiirwi Khan. A king named Shadi Khan ruled over Tabriz in 809 A.H. Urs Khan Uzbek was a contemporary of Temur Sahabe Qur'an (the companion of the Qur'an). Urs Khan's son was Temur Malik Khan Uzbek whose successor was Tugtamish Khan Uzbek who ruled over the Kipchak Khanate (the Golden Horde) who was defeated by Temur Sahabe Qur'an. Faulad Khan Uzbek conquered and ruled over Turkistan in 815 A.H. Sultan Sayeed Mirza Shahrukh married a girl of his family. Muhammad Khan Uzbek came to the throne after Faulad Khan. Burraq Khan Uzbek, from the progeny of Urs Khan, took help from Ulagh Beg Temuri and attacked Muhammad Khan Uzbek and occupied Turkistan. Ulagh Beg Khan Temuri and Burraq Khan then clashed with each other and Ulagh Beg was defeated. As a result of this defeat, Sultan Sayeed Mirza Shahrukh Khan attacked and punished Ulagh Khan. Following the invasion of Mirza Shahrukh Khan, Burraq Khan returned from Samarkand. However, Sultan Mahmud Khan and Burraq Khan were later assassinated and with this ended the Uzbek Empire.

In 855 A.H., Sultan Abul Khair Khan and Badaq Khan Uzbek captured Samarkand and established their rule. Abul Khair Khan's son was

Badaq Khan and Badaq Khan's son was Abul Fath Muhammad Khan, who was the contemporary of Zahiruddin Babar. This Sultan Abul Fath Muhammad Khan Uzbek is also known as Shebani Khan Uzbek who was killed fighting with Ismail Safwi. He was a gallant fighter and had dislodged Babar from Turkistan and Farghona (eastern Uzbekistan). Sultan Abul Fath Khan Uzbek was later seated on the throne by the Uzbeks.

Jani Beg has found mention above; his son was Iskander Khan whose son was Abdullah Khan, who defeated the Persians decisively. Abdullah Khan Uzbek was the contemporary of king Akbar of India. He was also in correspondence with Akbar. Abdullah Khan died in 1006 A.H. and was succeeded by his son Abdul Momin Khan but was, within a few days, killed at the hands of his uncle, Rustam Sultan. Following this event the Uzbek kingdom was torn into pieces. Abdullah Khan's sister's son Wali Muhammad Khan occupied Turkistan after Abdul Momin Khan, entrusted Mawaraunnahr (between the Amu [Oxus] and Syr rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) to Imam Quli Khan and Badakhshan (in present day Afghanistan) to his sister's son Nazar Muhammad Khan. Within a short time, Wali Muhammad Khan was dislodged by Nazar Muhammad Khan. He took refuge with King Abbas of Persia. The Uzbeks had previously established a kingdom in Khwarizm (territories of present day Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) but it was not strong or impressive.

### **Offspring Of Chogatai Khan**

Genghis Khan had given Turkistan, Khurasan, Ghazni and the entire territory around river Indus to his son Chogatai Khan and made Commander Qarachar Birlas his commander-in-chief. After the death of Genghis Khan, Chogatai Khan always remained loyal and faithful to his younger brother Ogdai Khan. Chogatai Khan was very brave and wise. He died in 640 A.H. Following the death of Chogatai Khan Prime Minister Qarachar seated Qarabalaku Khan, the grandson of Chogatai Khan on the throne. Guyuk Khan, son of Ogdai Khan objected to this arrangement on the plea that how could the grandson be enthroned in the presence of Chogatai Khan's son Maisu Mungku

Khan. Thus, Maisu Mungku Khan was enthroned by dethroning Qarabalaku Khan. But, shortly after the demise of Maisu Mungku Khan, Qarabalaku Khan was brought to the throne once again. After his death, his wife Warghana Khatun was seated on the throne and Alghu Khan of Chogatai tribe succeeded her. But, he too died after reigning for one year. His son Mubarak Shah Chogatai then became the king of the Mongols.

Chogatai tribe joined hands with Tolui Khan's progeny in all their campaigns and adventures even though these two tribes were rivals in the past. The progeny of Tolui Khan, son of Genghis Khan had attained utmost greatness and grandeur due to Hulagu Khan's style of governance and Chogatai Khan's progeny had fallen behind in this field. Even though the Chogatai kept their control over Herat and its adjoining territories, they by time, conceded to the authority and supremacy of Hulagu Khan and his progeny and sometimes declared their own sovereignty. Among them Sultan Ghayasuddin Muhammad Buraq Khan, son of Maisun Tuwan Khan had attained much fame and came into serious conflict with Abagha Khan in Khurasan. His descendant Turma Shirin Khan came to the throne and invaded Qandahar. He also fought against Amir Hasan Saldoz in the suburbs of Ghazni in 716 A.H. and lost the battles. Turma Shirin Khan had also launched an attack on India. After Turma Shirin Khan his brother, Faulad Khan became the king of the Chogatai tribes and died in 735 A.H. He was succeeded by Aghlan, son of Dawa Khan.

During his tenure, Amir Temur Sahabe Qur'an came to the throne of Khurasan. A series of battles were fought between Temur Sahabe Qur'an and Khidr Khawaja Khan. At last, Khidr Khawaja was defeated and bought peace and safety from Temur by giving his daughter, Khanam Khan in marriage. Khidr Khawaja Khan was succeeded by his son Muhammad Khan and then his brother Jahan Aghlan son of Ibn Khidr Khawaja Khan came to throne. Jahan Aghlan was succeeded by Sher Muhammad Khan who came into conflict with Ulagh Temuri, King of Khurasan and Mawaraunnahr in which Sher Muhammad Khan was defeated. Among his descendants were Mahmud Khan and Ahmad Ulja Khan, sons of Yunus Khan. Zahiruddin Muhammad Babar sought help from these two brothers against Shebani Khan Uzbek and they gave it, but both the brothers were captured fighting

on the battlefield. They were produced before Shebani Khan and he set them free. But both of them committed suicide out of shame shortly after being released and thus the Chogatai dynasty came to an end.

Although Mansur Khan, son of Sultan Ahmad Ulja Khan became the king of Mongolia it was only in name and the territory was actually ruled over by Shebani Khan.

The Mongol dynasty may be divided into two parts or classes Genghisid Mongols and Temuri Mongols. The Genghisid Mongols have already been mentioned above and will now be summarized. We will then discuss the Temuri Mongols.

### **A Glance At Genghisid Mongols**

The greatest event of Islamic world was the devastation of Baghdad caused by Hulagu Khan. Prior to this, Hulagu's grandfather Genghis Khan had reddened Iran and Khurasan with Muslim blood. Their plunder and carnage had turned the Genghisid Mongols into a curse and scourge in the eyes of the Muslims. Dynastic rule had germinated so many ills and paved the way to the throne for such a large number of unworthy souls that the Islamic character was dreadfully eroded and Islamic glory was brought down. During this era of depravity, nothing was practically done to reform the situation and to put a check on the fall and decline of Islamic values.

By the end of the sixth century Hijri, Islamic rule particularly the Caliphate of Baghdad had become incorrigible. The Seljuks and other mighty empires could, in spite of having glory and magnificence, did not dare to do away with the Caliphate. The creed that none save the Abbasid dynasty could do any good for the Muslims had gained firm ground in Muslim minds. This wrong creed proved very harmful because dynastic rule had spread over a very long period and almost stopped the birth of able and worthy rulers. Fortitude, determination, enterprise and soldierly attributes of Muslims had disappeared. In such a precarious state of degeneration, Allah Almighty brought to the fore unknown and unnoticed, savage and ignorant Mongols to punish the unworthy and depraved Muslims and then to inject pure and fresh blood into the veins of Islam. The Genghisid Mongols,

through their plunder, arson and large-scale bloodshed of the Muslims, established their own empire and demolished the so-called caliphate carried by evil and unworthy elements in the name of Islam. This caliphate was, in truth, a deep scar on the spotless face of Islam. Islam is a system of governance, which let the uncivilized and unequipped Muslims conquer the magnificent Empires of Caesar and Choroos. But the day they renounced the teachings of Islam they kept falling into the quagmire of disgrace and ignominy. The Mongols won victories over the Muslims not because they deserved it more; they did it because Allah Almighty wanted them to become a source of a rude awakening to the inert and forgetful Believers in Islam.

The Mongols, as a whole, were neither sympathetic nor antagonistic to Islam. Even when they developed in them a natural desire to be acquainted with the teachings of Islam, they accepted what they could comprehend and rejected outright what lay outside their power of comprehension. Now it can be safely said that the Muslims gained more from the Mongols morally and spiritually than they lost physically and materially. Islamic rule, instead of losing its existence, was rewarded substantially when the pure and truthful teachings of Islam subdued their minds and conquered their hearts. The conquerors were themselves conquered by the mighty sword of Islamic values. Countless Mongol swords once raised against Islam became devoted to the service of the Religion of Allah Almighty. Had the wild and wanton conquests, plunder and carnage not been committed by the dashing and haughty conquerors like Genghis Khan and Hulagu Khan the might and dominating spirit of Islam which conquered their hearts in a very short time could not have been comprehended. Moreover, their forthright feelings and straightforward behavior allowed Muslim scholars and preachers to propagate the moral and spiritual values and impart the truthful and trustworthy teachings of Islam all over the Mongol territories without any fear of being called to account or taken to task. Free from all kinds of religious bigotry they allowed their receptive minds to absorb the true spirit of Islam.

Very few historians have paid attention to the fact that Islam received an easy access to Mongolia, China, and Turkistan while the people of Syria, Egypt, Tripoli, Morocco, Iran, Khurasan, and Baluchistan put



obstructions in the way of Islam and resisted its entry into their territories. They turned to Islam only after large-scale bloodshed and destruction.

Islam had stepped in eastern Turkistan and Tibet during the Caliphate of Uthman Bin Affan. Flourishing fast in China and Turkistan Islam had enveloped the entire population by the very first century Hijrah. However, conspiratorial activities of the Alwis and the destruction of the Umayyads had caused damage to the growing tree of Islam. Moreover, selfish designs and personal rivalries of the Governors blocked the preaching efforts and the army of Islam and thus lost attraction for the non-Muslims even though China and Turkistan had fertile lands for Islam. Seljuk tribes embraced Islam without fear or greed and did splendid service to Islam. Ghaznavid Turks had entered the Islamic countries as robbers and plunderers and confessed Islam of their own. Even today, Islam has a large number of followers in China and they have all embraced Islam not due to any military campaign; they are direct descendants of the ancient inhabitants of China. Genghis Khan and his comrades had victoriously stepped into Islamic territories but they showed their interest in being acquainted with the reality of Islam from the very outset. They accepted this Religion of Truth and served it with sincerity. The offspring of Genghis Khan also accepted and served Islam through difficulty and ease. It is a strange fact that in the countries to the extreme west, Morocco and Spain they marched victoriously with swords in their hands while in the countries of the extreme east, China and the Pacific islands traders and preachers conveyed Islam to the bulk of population. They preached the message of Islam both as a vanquished and a victor.

It is human nature that during the days of ignorance, the most suitable form of governance is autocracy. Democracy in a state of ignorance can bring only lawlessness, disorder and disruption. The Mongols also lived in the hills and mountains like Bedouins and the ignorant. They had a very high concept of a chief or a king. Their leaders wielded so much power that the tribes looked upon them in the same position. It may rather be safely said that king-worship was a characteristic feature of the eastern countries. Since the Mongols had seized the crowns and thrones of the eastern countries after some time, and the

earlier concept of king-worship remained intact with them and it continued even after their becoming civilized and well mannered. Both Islam and human nature go against king-worship. But this king-worshipping proved beneficial to Islam as the acceptance of Islam by two or three Mongol kings led all of their subjects to the fold of Islam with the exception of Juchi Khan and his progeny who were late in embracing Islam because of their being at such a great distance from the world of Islam. The Uzbeks welcomed Islam with open arms and history bears no evidence that the Mongols ever rose against their rulers simply because of their coming into the domain of Islam. Even when they revolted against their Muslim kings, the sole reason was material and temporal gains. Since the Mongols accepted Islam as kings, they could not reconcile themselves with the nature and taste of Islam until several generations and remained like those converts still in the process of conversion to Islam and not as pure Muslims. It is because of this that the Mongols never showed an active interest in spreading Islam. Keeping the above-mentioned facts in view, one should not express surprise over some of the religious irregularities of King Akbar of India.

The Tartars were more acquainted with Islam than the Mongols. It is because of this the Mongols never took an active part or showed such a deep interest in Islam and its moral and spiritual tenets and values as the Tartars and the Seljuks did.

## Chapter 17

# **Brief Supplement Of the Islamic History Of Persia**

Even though a greater part of Persian history has found place in the history of Islam as a whole, those who have written an exclusive history of Persia have followed quite a different order in mentioning events and their order was defined to suit their purpose. Since Muslims have been more closely attached to Persian history it seems proper to narrate it briefly so that some of the events left out during placement by the majority of historian and their classification can find a proper reference.

### **Saffariah Dynasty**

In the history of Persia, the Saffaria dynasty finds an important place as a sovereign rule. Since Abbasid caliphate had received active support from the Persians, it was not reluctant at all in providing the Persians opportunities to expand their power and influence against the Arabs. It came into their minds the thought of establishing their own royal empire. But the Persians could not attain success while the Abbasid dynasty retained their fighting quality, fortitude and determination. However, when Abbasid Caliphs took to a life of

luxury and comfort and lost their spirit and courage, Yaqub bin Laith succeeded in setting up his own independent regime. He belonged to a family of brass vessel makers therefore he was called "saffar", which comes from the word brass in Arabic. He achieved this success simply because of his soldierly character. Yaqub was matchless in friendliness, generosity and simplicity. He easily made friends and served them wholeheartedly even at the cost of his own comfort. Due to these honorable traits, he was able to gather around him a very large circle of friends, supporters, followers and well wishers. As a king, he never ignored his childhood friends and gave them opportunity to attain high social and political positions. Even during his tenure as a ruler, he behaved like an ordinary soldier. He never showed any reluctance in sleeping on the ground and digging trenches. He abhorred the life of luxury and debauchery. He showed firmness and determination in whatever task he performed. These are the reasons why he reached the pinnacle of power and glory from a very humble position. He became so mighty and formidable that the Caliphate of Baghdad was never able to overpower him by any means.

Following the death of Yaqub, bin Laith, his brother Amr bin Laith came to the throne. He expanded his territory. Even though he is said to be superior to Yaqub in wisdom and sagacity, he lacked the soldierly character and simplicity of his brother. He was once defeated by Muwaffaq, the brother of Caliph Mu'tamid. But he lost no time in restoring his position and became a terror for the caliphate. At last, the caliph sent Ismail Samani, Governor of Mawaraunnahr to take on Amr bin Laith. Ismail Samani came out with twenty thousand horsemen against Amr bin Laith's seventy thousand strong cavalry, which had come across the river Oxus to give battle to his enemy. However, during the fierce fighting Amr bin Laith's horse carried him to the battle line of Ismail Samani's army where he was easily captured.

Ismail Samani sent him to Baghdad and thus the greatness and grandeur of the Saffaria almost met its doom.

The greatest difference between Yaqub bin Laith and Amr bin Laith lay in the fact that, while Yaqub could live on dry bread and face hardships with a smile on his lips Amr bin Laith lived a luxurious life with all the royal comforts and splendor at his command.

In the morning of the day Amr bin Laith was captured his cook had complained that three hundred camels were not enough to carry the load of his kitchen so he needed more beasts of burden. The same evening Amr bin Laith was captured, he complained about hunger to his cook who was also in prison with him. The cook found a pot there, which he put on with some water and a little half-ground cereal. Nothing else was available to eat. Amr bin Laith was impatiently waiting for the food and at last the cook removed the pot from the stove and left the spot for an urgent piece of work. Meanwhile, a dog came in, caught the edge of the pot in his mouth and made off with the pot. Amr bin Laith called out to his cook and said to him, "In the morning you had complained to me that three hundred camels were not enough to carry the load of the kitchen. Behold now! How a single dog is carrying my entire kitchen."

Since the demise of Amr bin Laith, his descendants ruled over the limited area of Sistan (eastern Iran and southwestern Afghanistan) but only in name. Yaqub bin Laith's maternal grandson named Khalaf took over as the ruler and ruled over Sistan until the time of Mahmud Ghaznavi. Khalaf's son rose against him but he was killed by Khalaf. The citizens of Sistan complained to Mahmud Ghaznavi against Khalaf to save them from the atrocities of Khalaf. King Mahmud Ghaznavi invaded Sistan. In the wake of the fall of his fort, Khalaf appeared before Mahmud Ghaznavi, kissed his stirrup and said after rubbing his beard with his feet, "Forgive me O' Sultan." Mahmud Ghaznavi liked the word "Sultan" from the lips of Khalaf and adopted it as his appellation. He gave Khalaf no punishment. He took him to Ghazni where he passed away after four years.

### **Samanid Dynasty**

Asad bin Saman reckoned himself among the descendants of Behram Chaubin. He took his four sons to Caliph Mamun Rasheed Abbasi at Merv. Mamun had succeeded against his brother, Amin in coming to throne with much active support from the Persians. Therefore, Mamun had a favorable attitude towards Asad bin Saman and his progeny, which evoked no wonder. From that day, the Samanids made rapid progress and consolidated their position. Ismail, the grandson of Asad bin Saman attained the position of a king after

subduing Amr bin Laith. The Samanids remained nominally attached to the Caliphate of Baghdad positioned against the Saffar dynasty.

Ismail Samanid ruled over Mawaraunnahr (between the Amu [Oxus] and Syr rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) and Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan) for seven or eight years. Caliph Mu'atazid Abbasi of Baghdad had issued him credentials to rule over Khurasan. His son Abu Nazir Ahmad succeeded Ismail.

Ismail was noble and good-natured and relied exclusively on Allah Almighty. He was well aware of the principles both of conquests and administration. His subjects loved him.

But Ahmad bin Ismail displeased his courtiers and relatives. His six-year rule was fraught with conspiracies against him and at last, his slaves assassinated him.

His son Nasr bin Ahmad succeeded him at the tender age of 18. He took after his grandfather, Ismail. Shortly after accession, he expanded his territory and ruled for thirty years with all his energy. Nasr bin Ahmad died and was buried in Bukhara.

His son, Nuh bin Nasr acceded to the throne and died in 343 A.H. after ruling for thirteen years and was succeeded by his son Abdul Malik bin Nuh. He died falling from his horse while playing polo.

His brother, Mansur bin Nuh came to the throne as his successor. He married the daughter of Ruknuddaula Dailmi. His rule was acknowledged in the provinces of Iraq and Persia too. His Minister, Abu Ali bin Muhammad had the history book of Tabari translated into Persian. He had tenure of fifteen years.

His son, Abul Qasim Nuh II succeeded him. With his accession, the Samanid dynasty was overtaken by decline and calamity and his courtiers rose against him and invited Bughra Khan, the king of Mongolia to attack him. Bughra Khan defeated him and seized Bukhara. But Bughra Khan died following his conquest of Bukhara and his army returned to its country. Nuh II then occupied Bukhara and consolidated his rule. It was the time when Ghazni was ruled by Sebuktigin, the founder of the Ghaznavid Dynasty.

After getting rid of Bughra Khan, Nuh II wanted to chastise his unfaithful and insurgent nobles. But they escaped, took refuge with Fakhruddaula and with his support invaded Bukhara. Nuh II sought help from Sebuktigin once again who took on the insurgents near Herat and repulsed their attack after a fierce fight. Sebuktigin's son Mahmud Ghaznawi showed his swordsmanship and gallantry in this battle. Nuh II grew happy and conferred upon Mahmud Ghaznawi the title of Saifuddaulah. Nuh II ruled for 22 years but his reign was beset with feuds, battles and revolts. He continued fighting his enemies his whole life as a king and yet lost his provinces one by one.

Nuh II was succeeded by his son, Mansur II. His father's detractors and opponents kept him anxious and embarrassed all the time and, at last, forced him out of Bukhara. Later on, they acknowledged him as a king but took the administrative affairs under their own control and appointed a new ruler for Khurasan. But Mahmud Ghaznawi drove their new ruler out and captured Khurasan.

During this period, the commanders dethroned and blinded Mansur and seated his brother Abdul Malik II bin Nuh II on the throne. Then they led him to attack Mahmud Ghaznawi. But Mahmud Ghaznawi defeated Abdul Malik II and his troops and drove them towards Bukhara. Elaj Khan, the ruler of Kashgar (a city in the extreme western part of China) seized Khwarizm (territories of present day Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and attacked Bukhara, with the result Elaj Khan arrested Abdul Malik II and occupied Bukhara. Abdul Malik II's third brother Muntasir escaped from Bukhara in disguise and was killed after wandering with pirates for a short time and with this the Samanid dynasty came to an end.

### **Delmid Dynasty**

The Delmid and the Samanid dynasties were contemporary but rival powers. The Samanids had occupied Mawaraunnahr (between the Amu [Oxus] and Syr rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan), Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan) while the Delmids ruled over Persia, Iraq, and Azerbaijan. All of Persia was ruled over by these two dynasties for a short period.

Although the Samanid Dynasty was replaced by the Ghaznavids, the Delmids's weak and wretched rule dragged on for some time.

### **Ghaznavid Dynasty**

Abdul Malik bin Nuh had appointed Alaptagin as the Governor of Khurasan. When Mansur bin Nuh, the Samanid succeeded Abdul Malik in 350 A.H., Alaptagin came to Ghazni for he had expressed himself to be against the accession of Mansur. Ghazni was then a small settlement. Alaptagin consolidated his position there and established a sovereign state.

On the death of Alaptagin in 367 A.H., his son Ishaq Ghaznawi came to the throne, but, in a very short period, he proved himself unworthy and was either deposed by the military commanders or died a natural death. With his end, they acknowledged Sebuktigin, the commander-in-chief and son-in-law of Alaptagin as their king.

It is said that Sebuktigin was the slave of Alaptagin but it so happened only by circumstance. Some robbers once found him alone on the road and sold him in Bukhara. Sebuktigin's lineage meets with that of King Yazdgard. However, it is difficult to prove the authenticity of this claim. Some historians have held him as a Turk, while others have claimed that he was Turk from his father's side and Persian from his mother's. Nevertheless, he was a noble person by his birth and genealogy. In accordance with the Asian practice the nobles, commanders and men enjoying high positions did not feel any disgrace in calling themselves a slave of the king. May be, Sebuktigin would have called himself the slave of Alaptagin owing to being the commander-in-chief of his army. Sir John Malcom, *The History of Persia from the Early Period to the Present Time* (1815) holds the same view. Sebuktigin conquered scores of cities and ruled for about twenty years. He won the battle of Herat and defeated and arrested Raja Jaipal Singh of the Punjab and Sind who had invaded his country and released him only on promising tribute. But Jaipal Singh committed a breach of promise and launched another attack with a huge army of three hundred thousand. However, Sebuktigin gave him a smashing defeat with a few thousand troops and captured him again but set him free on the promise of being loyal to him. Nuh bin Mansur had offered



him the title of Nasiruddin and his son Mahmud was entitled with Saifuddaulah. Sebuktigin expanded the Ghaznavid rule before his final departure in 387 A.H. His son, Ismail succeeded him in Balkh but was subdued and deposed by his brother after a fight.

Mahmud bin Sebuktigin came to the throne of Ghazni in 387 A.H. Caliph Qadir Billah Abbasi conferred upon him the title of Yaminuddaulah and Aminul Millat. After accession, Mahmud Ghaznawi began his campaigns very ably. The opponents instigated Abdul Malik against Mahmud but he was defeated at the hands of Mahmud and fled to Bukhara. Elej Khan or Elek Khan, the king of Kashgar (a city in the extreme west of China) captured Bukhara and arrested Abdul Malik. Mahmud Ghaznawi attacked Elej Khan, son of Bughra Khan and annexed Bukhara. He later defeated the Mongol Commander Tugha Khan, son of Altu Khan and expanded his territory up to the Caspian Sea, besides occupying Khwarizm (territories of present day Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). While Sistan (eastern Iran and southwestern Afghanistan) and Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan) were already part of the Ghaznavid dynasty from the time of Sebuktigin, Mahmud defeated Majuddaulah Delmi and occupied Isfahan. He also launched a number of attacks on India. In short, Mahmud Ghaznawi extended his rule from Sutlej River (the largest of the five rivers that give the Punjab, meaning five rivers, its name) to the Caspian Sea and from Mawaraunnahr (between the Amu [Oxus] and Syr rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) to Baluchistan and Iraq in a comparatively short period.

Mahmud Ghaznawi is reckoned among the mightiest and most renowned emperors of the Asian continent. During his tenure, the Persians made rapid progress. He was a true and pious Muslim and a great lover of learning. It was during his period that Firdausi composed *Shahnameh*, *The Book of Kings*. The Samanid court conferred upon him the title of "Amirul Umrai" "Prince of Princes." But, in 389 A.H., Mahmud declared himself a sovereign ruler and dropped the name of Abdul Malik Samani from the address.

Mahmud Ghaznawi was born on Muharram 9, 361 A.H. and died at the age of 60. He was the mightiest Muslim emperor of his time. He

had divided his empire between his two sons during his lifetime; giving Khwarizm (territories of present day Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), Iraq, Persia, and Isfahan to his elder son Mas'ud and Mawaraunnahr (between the Amu [Oxus] and Syr rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan), Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan), Ghazni, and Punjab to his younger son, Muhammad. However, shortly after the death of Mahmud both the brothers fell out with each other. Muhammad seated on the throne of Ghazni and Mas'ud came to the throne of Rayy (southeast of Tehran). First of all the two brothers came to clash over the question of the order of mentioning their names in the official addresses. Mas'ud, being the elder brother, wanted his name to be placed above that of Muhammad. However, Muhammad contended that his name should be mentioned above for he was seated on the throne of his father. All of the discussion was just a false pretence, they, in fact, wanted to subdue one another. At last, Mas'ud attacked Ghazni, captured it and blinded Muhammad after having him arrested.

Mas'ud then occupied Baluchistan (in modern day one Province of Pakistan) and Makran (on the Persian and Pakistan coastline). Family feuds resulted in a series of revolts and Sultan Mas'ud bin Mahmud could not maintain his territorial integrity. The Seljuk Turks started their acts of plunder in Khwarizm (territories of present day Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). Provisional Governors in the Punjab and other parts of India also rose in revolt, with the result his empire began to disintegrate. But Sultan Mas'ud showed his courage and determination and came out to put down the rebellions. He gave a series of defeats to the Seljuks of Khwarizm and Khurasan. In the meantime, he invaded India as well and demolished the strong forts of Sarsuti (northwestern India, on the edge of the Great Indian, Thar, Desert) and Hansi (northwestern India in Haryana state). He then hurried back to Ghazni where he found a large number of Seljuks arrayed against his country.

Sultan Mas'ud had recruited a large number of Hindus in his army. He had under him a number of Hindu regiments and he had appointed some of the Hindus as commanders. Mas'ud loved to build Hindu regiments by giving them military training and teaching them

manners. With this purpose in view, he sent some Hindu commanders to India to recruit their relatives and bring them to Ghazni. When Hindu soldiers came to Ghazni, Mas'ud paid them salaries more than what he would pay to the Persians and the Afghans. A Hindu named Tilak was given the title of Maharaja and was appointed as the commander-in-chief of his army. Since Maharaja Tilak was the son of a Hindu barber, his high position disheartened most of the Muslim commanders and nobles and they lodged complaints to Mas'ud against appeasing the Hindu fighters. Even the fall of Makran due only to the timidity of the Hindu regiment did not alter his mind or change his policy, although they had escaped from the battlefield pushing Sultan Mas'ud and the Afghan troops into an arena of death and destruction. Mas'ud saved his life with the sacrifice of his true and faithful companions and he brought with him a feeling of shame arising out of his ignominious defeat. He took a very strange decision to eliminate his sense of shame and frustration. He left his Minister and son, Maudud in Ghazni, loaded all his treasures and possessions on elephants, camels, bullock carts and men and proceeded towards India in the company of his Hindu commanders and their regiments with a plan to make Lahore the seat of his Government. Since Sultan Mas'ud had already disclosed his plan, his nobles and commanders tried their level best to persuade him to change his mind and they also tried to ensure that the defeat could be successfully avenged. However, he would not pay any heed to their pleas. He left Ghazni after removing the treasures and took away all the jewels, ornaments, gold, valuable utensils and costly garments. Before his departure, he wrote to his son Maudud who was then in Balkh and Badakhshan (in present day Afghanistan). "I hereby appoint you ruler of Ghazni and Khurasan. You keep obeying the orders I shall be issuing in your name. Moreover, you should make an all out effort to end the Seljuks' occupation of your land."

As soon as Sultan Mas'ud crossed the Indus River the Hindu regiments and their Hindu commanders betrayed him and fell upon the royal possessions and robbed all, of what Sebuktigin (founder of the Ghaznavid dynasty) and Mahmud Ghaznawi had collected over a span of 40 or 50 years. They left leaving Sultan Mas'ud at the mercy of a small band of his Muslim comrades.

In the wake of this soul-shattering event, this small body of the Muslims deposed him for his mental imbalances and brought his blinded brother Muhammad to the throne after releasing him from prison. With the enthronement of Muhammad, many of the evasive Hindu soldiers gathered round him for they no longer feared any punishment from Mas'ud.

When Mas'ud was produced before Muhammad he, instead of taking revenge for his blindness, he asked him what was his preference. Mas'ud told him that he should be allowed to stay in Kiri Fort and Muhammad conceded his request forthwith and sent him there along with his wife and children.

Ahmad, son of Muhammad, went to the Kiri Fort without permission and without his father's knowledge and avenged his father's blindness on his uncle, Mas'ud. Muhammad expressed his deep regret at this unpleasant event. In a letter to his nephew in Balkh Muhammad informed him that he had no hand in the assassination of his father, Mas'ud and that Ahmad had committed this heinous act of his own accord. Maudud marched at the head of an army to fight for his rights. Muhammad's troops made an attempt to stop him at the bank of the river Indus but Muhammad's army was defeated and Maudud captured Muhammad and his wife and children and killed them all. Following this Maudud went to Ghazni and sat on the throne in 435 A.H.

Maudud also fought a number of battles against the Seljuks like his father, Mas'ud however, he had to be content with his rule over Mawaraunnahr, Ghazni and India. The rest Khurasan, Khwarizm, and Iraq slipped out of his hands forever and the Seljuks began their rule over them.

Maudud bin Mas'ud died in 440 A.H. then his son Ali came to the throne. His son, Abdur Rashid, succeeded him but in a matter of days, he was killed by a commander named, Tughril who occupied the throne but was assassinated by the nobles, and Farkhzad, son of Mas'ud came to the throne in 444 A.H.

Farkhzad showed his courage and caliber. He built his army to force out the Seljuks from Khurasan and he succeeded in his initial

campaigns. However, his fight against Alp Arsalan Seljuk proved disastrous to him and he could not win Khurasan.

Ibrahim bin Mas'ud, the brother of Farkhzad succeeded Farkhzad in 450 A.H. Sultan Ibrahim was virtuous, pious, brave and wise. He made peace with the Seljuks. Following this treaty, they began to consider themselves within their rights to rule over Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan). After winning peace on this front Sultan Ibrahim turned to India. In the wake of feuds and fights against the Seljuks, they could not maintain sufficient attention on India for very long. A number of commanders and Rajas (Kings) showed defiant attitudes and stopped giving tribute. Sultan Ibrahim launched a number of attacks on the insurgents in India and consolidated his rule. He died in 493 A.H. after reigning over a span of 42 or 43 years.

Mas'ud bin Ibrahim then came to the throne and died in 509 A.H. after a reign of 16 years. Mas'ud bin Ibrahim had also made Lahore his capital for a short period.

Mas'ud was succeeded by his son Arsalan and ruled for three years. Sultan Sanjar Seljuk conquered Ghazni and brought Behram bin Mas'ud bin Ibrahim, brother of Arsalan to the throne of Ghazni.

Behram reigned for 35 years. He also invaded India several times to punish the insurgents. He passed most of his time in Lahore. The book entitled *Kalila wa Dimna* and the *Khamisa Nizami* were written during his rule. During the last days of his rule, the Ghouries invaded Ghazni and ousted him from Ghazni. He escaped to India and died in Lahore in 347 A.H. The Punjab was left to be ruled by the Ghaznavids while Ghazni came under the rule of the Ghouries.

Following the death of Behram his son, Khusrau Shah came to the throne. He made a great effort to take Ghazni out of the clutches of the Ghouries but his attempts failed to materialize any positive results. He died in Lahore after reigning for 8 years.

His son, Malik bin Khusrau was seated on the throne in Lahore in 555 A. H. The Ghouries captured Malik bin Khusrau and occupied the Punjab. This ended the Ghaznavid dynasty.

## **Seljuk Dynasty**

A Turk named Waqar with Temur Taligh as his appellation was related to Paigu, the king of Turkistan. His son was Seljuk by name. He claimed his genealogy to be meeting with that of Afrasiyab in the thirty forth generation. He also had access to the court like his father. Seljuk became displeased with Paigu and shifted to Samarkand and Bukhara along with his sons. This occurred when Nuh II Samani was ruling over Bukhara. Persuaded by the Muslim Governor of Jund, Seljuk embraced Islam; the Jund was a tributary of Paigu, the king of Turkistan. A short time later, Paigu's collectors came to collect tribute. Thereupon Seljuk told them that the idea of the Unbelievers collecting tribute from the Muslims was intolerable to him. Seljuk's courage infused new spirit into the people and they with Seljuk attacked the collectors sent by Paigu and were successful. Seljuk shot in to fame and his act of valor was inspirational for everyone. The people of his tribe rushed to cluster round him. When Elej Khan attacked Nuh II, Seljuk sided with Nuh II and fought valiantly. Seljuk's son, Mika'il was killed in the battle. Mika'il's two sons were then raised by Seljuk. Seljuk had four more sons named, Israel, Yunus, Yanal and Musa. Showing exceptional valor during a battle was the best way to power among the Turk and Mongol tribes. Thus, Seljuk and his sons attained renown and power in a very short time and the Turks gathered around them. Elek Khan and Paigu joined hands to destroy the Seljuks. Meanwhile, Seljuk died. His grandson Chager Beg wanted to march on Armenia to wage a holy war against the Christians. However, the province of Tus (in the area of present day Meshed, Iran) was in between Bukhara and Armenia, which was a part of the Ghaznavid Empire. However, the Governor of Tus let him pass through the territory as a matter of cooperation with his holy campaign. Mahmud Ghaznawi was a sensible and far-sighted man. When he came to know of the Seljuk army's passing through his territory, he called for an explanation from the Governor of Tus for he anticipated a possible assault and plunder on his territory by them. On way back from Armenia, their strong force had grown stronger, and they started grazing their animals in the suburbs of Balkh and they halted there for this purpose. Being acquainted with the state of

affairs, Mahmud Ghaznawi called the Seljuk chief to his court through his governor. With respect to age and sensibility Israel, the elder son of Seljuk was considered more suitable for the job. When he appeared before Mahmud Ghaznawi, he was greeted with esteem. After a preliminary chat, Mahmud Ghaznawi came to the point and said, "How many men can you provide if I am in need of troops?" Putting his arrow before Mahmud, Israel replied, "If you send this arrow to our tribes in the forest you will find one hundred thousand men standing before you." Thereupon Mahmud said, "In case I need some more men how many more could you give me?" Placing his bow before him Israel said, "If you send this bow to our tribes, two hundred thousand men will turn up to serve you." Now Mahmud Ghaznawi could easily determine the strength of the Seljuks. He then held Israel as a guarantee for peace and sent him to India where he remained a captive in the Kalingar Fort for 7 years. The Seljuk rule went to Tughril Beg and Chagher Beg, these two brothers ruled over the tribes with accord and amity.

Mahmud Ghaznawi gave a piece of land to the Seljuks in Mawaraunnahr (between the Amu [Oxus] and Syr rivers in modern Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) to serve as a pasture. Moreover, he allowed them to cross the river Oxus and settle in Khurasan. Objecting to this decision Arsalan Jadeh, the Governor of Tus and Balkh questioned, "Why do you allow them to come across the river Oxus? They are a contentious people and they are bound to give trouble". Mahmud was aware of his own strength and besides, he has a plan to recruit them into his army to serve his purpose plus Israel's confinement was still a point in his favor, which he could exploit. When Mahmud passed away, Sultan Mas'ud set Israel free and he joined his nephews. With his arrival, the Seljuks rose to power. Sultan Mas'ud had not yet consolidated his position when Chagher Beg seized Merv and Herat and Tughril Beg occupied Nishapur. When Mas'ud Ghaznawi decided to punish them, they gave him so many anxious moments that, at last, he gave the entire territory of Khurasan to them.

Tughril Beg then shifted his capital to Rayy, while Chagher Beg stayed in Merv. The official addresses carried the names of both the brothers. Chagher Beg then annexed Khwarizm (territories of present day Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and made a successful attack on the



Romans (present day Turkey). They reached Baghdad and put an end to the Delmid rule. He was then appointed as the prime Minister of the Caliph of Baghdad and received a title and royal robes from the Caliphate. Tughril Beg's name was mentioned in the address delivered in Baghdad in 447 A. H. He died in 455 A.H. at the age of 70, while Chagher Beg had already passed away in 451 A.H.

Since Tughril Beg died without any children his nephew, Alp Arsalan bin Chagher Beg succeeded him. After reigning for nine years, he died in 465 A.H. He was a devout Muslim and the greatest Muslim king of his time. He once defeated a huge Christian force of three hundred thousand soldiers with a cavalry of 12 thousand and also captured the Caesar of Constantinople Romanus IV Diogenes.

Malik Shah Seljuk came to the throne after his father, Alp Arsalan. Qawurd, the brother of Alp Arsalan opposed his nephew but was captured and killed. Malik Shah then annexed Syria and Egypt. He had an empire even larger than Alp Arsalan's. He died in 484 A.H.

His son, Barkeyaraq succeed him and this was the beginning of the decline of the Seljuks. His brother, Muhammad bin Shah came to the throne in 496 A.H.

Sanjar bin Malik Shah was seated on the throne in 509 A.H. and was known as Sultanus'salatin (Sultan of Sultans). Sultan Behram Ghaznawi had agreed to pay tribute to him under compulsion. When Sultan Alaaddin Ghouri Jahan Soz dislodged Behram and occupied Ghazni, Sultan Sanjar Seljuk appeared on the scene and captured Alaaddin Ghouri. The Oguz Turks once arrested him in the suburbs of Balkh and he passed four years as a captive. During this period, they ravaged the entire territory of Khurasan. At last, Sultan Sanjar got free and occupied Khurasan. Following this, the former servant of his father Anustegin and Governor of Khwarizm rose against him and laid the foundation of a new dynasty known as Khwarizm Shahiya (territories of present day Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). After the demise of Sultan Sanjar, his sister's son Mahmud Khan came to the throne in Nishapur in 550 A.H. During his time, the Gourids seized a part of Khurasan and the Khwarizm Shahs occupied the rest and wiped out all traces of the Seljuk dynasty.



Ten kings, the progeny of Qawurd, the brother of Alp Arsalan, are known as the Kermanid Seljuks. Kerman is bounded by Baluchistan and Sistan on the west, Yazd on the north, and Khorasan on the northeast. Their capital was Hamadan (west central Iran). Qawurd was killed in 465 A.H. opposing Malik Shah his nephew. His son, Shah Kerman succeeded him by the order of Malik Shah, son of Alp Arsalan. When he died after reigning for 12 years his brother, Turan Shah came to the throne and ruled for 13 years, and was succeeded by his son; Iran Shah and his end came after a reign of 42 years. His son, Mughithuddin then got the throne and held it for 14 years and made his final departure leaving behind his son, Mohiuddin Tughril Shah to occupy the throne and he ruled for 12 years. His son Behram Shah came to power after whom a number of persons namely, Arsalan Shah, Turan Shah, Muhammad Shah came to the throne one after the other ending the Kermanid Seljuk Dynasty.

Sultan Alp Arsalan Seljuk had sent Sulaiman Qatlamish bin Israel bin Seljuk to Asia Minor as Governor. He founded an independent state there. His progeny produce 14 kings who were called the Seljuks of Rome. The city of Konya was their capital. They ruled until the end of the seventh century Hegira and continuously fought against the Romans. They were followed by Ottoman Empire.

### **Khwarizm Shah Dynasty**

A Turkish slave of Malik Shah Seljuk named Qutbuddin bin Anustegin had access to Sultan Sanjar. Sultan Sanjar Seljuk appointed Qutbuddin as the Governor of Khwarizm. Whenever Qutbuddin came to Sultan Sanjar, he would serve him as usual in his royal garments. He served as governor of Khwarizm for a long time and came to be known as Khwarizm, His descendants also adopted the same title.

Qutbuddin remained loyal to Sanjar Seljuk but following Sanjar's arrest by the Oguz Turks, he (Qutbuddin) proclaimed sovereignty and invaded Mawaraunnahr. He was succeeded by his son Atsaz Khwarizm Shah.

Atsaz died about 540 A.H. and was succeeded by his son Arsalan Shah in 557 A.H. He and his brother, Ala ad-Din Tekish remained at odds

with each other all the time, which often led to armed conflict. At last, Ala ad-Din Tekish came out victorious and became the Khwarizm Shah. Ismail bin Hasan, author of *Dhakirah-e-Khwarizm* and the poet, Khakani belonged to his period. He had Tughril III Seljuk assassinated and expanded his own territories by capturing Khurasan (northeastern Iran, southern Turkmenistan, and northern Afghanistan) and Iraq.

After his death his son, Khwarizm Shah Muhammad bin Tekish came to the throne in 590 A.H. He ruled for 21 years and brought about a major territorial expansion. During this expansion, his relations with the Caliph of Baghdad deteriorated. After the demise of Shahabuddin Ghouri, Khwarizm Shah's territory extended up to Ghour and Ghazni. He defeated Atabak S'ad of Persia as well as Atabak Uzbek, the king of Azerbaijan. He then revolted against the Caliph of Baghdad and led an army against him intending to replace the Caliph by his spiritual guide, Sayed Ala al Mulk Tirmidhi. The caliph sent Sheikh Shahabuddin Sahrawardy to meet Muhammad Khwarizm Shah and have him reconsider such an action and to make peace. The mission bore no fruit and Muhammad Khwarizm Shah was determined to complete his plan. However, a natural calamity in the form of a heavy snowfall forced him back from attacking Iraq and he had not yet returned to his capital from this campaign when his country was stormed by Genghis Khan.

Sultan Muhammad bin Tekish Khwarizm Shah was a mighty king of his time. Even far off kings feared him. But, following the misfortune of snowfall, he suffered such a swift decline that he died in a state that he did not even have a burial shroud.

Sultan Muhammad ibn Tekish Khwarizm Shah had seven sons and three of them namely, Ruknuddin, Ghaythuiddin and Jalaluddin were Governors of the different provinces however, they all had strained relations, with the result they could not join ranks to face Genghis Khan and they were all routed one by one.

Jalaluddin Khwarizm Shah was the most famous among them. He fought Genghis Khan valiantly at the bank of Indus but without any result. He went to India but returned after a short stay in the Sind. On his way, back he broke the back of the atheists of the Alamut Fort. He fought the Mongols on one hand and the Romans on the other. He

won victories no doubt but the opposition was so powerful that he failed to regain his lost empire and died unknown and unnoticed. Historians mention his name with love and respect because of his bravery, which he had proved on several occasions. His end brought about the end of the Khwarizm Shah dynasty.

### **Ghourid Dynasty**

Ghour (modern day Ghowr) is a vast region in the west central of Afghanistan. Mahmud Ghaznawi conquered it and made it a province of his empire. The Ghourid people confessed Islam in the beginning of the second century and none but the Afghans inhabited the entire region. Mahmud Ghaznawi appointed a noble man as the Governor of Ghour whose ancestors enjoyed this position for a long period. Circumstantially, the relations between Sultan Behram Ghaznawi and Qutbuddin, the Governor of Ghour became strained and resulted in an armed conflict in which Qutbuddin was killed. Qutbuddin Ghouri's brother, Saifuddin invaded Ghazni and turned out Behram Ghaznawi from Ghazni and won the throne. Behram Ghaznawi secured help from the surrounding countries an attached Ghazni and had Saifuddin mercilessly tortured to death.

Being informed of the event his third brother, Alauddin, in order to avenge the assassination of his two brothers, invaded Ghazni. Behram Ghaznawi made an attempt to lure away the enemy troops with gems and jewels and win peace by this way but the memory of the ignominious and torturous assassination of Saifuddin did not allow their burning anger to be appeased with wealth. Thus, the crafty device of Behram failed and Alauddin conquered Ghazni. Behram Ghazni fled to India, but Alauddin Ghouri, by way of revenge committed a large-scale slaughter of the people of Ghazni. He demolished the tombs of Ghaznavid kings and set the houses on fire and this carnage continued for a week. Because of his wild and wanton carnage, he came to be known as Alauddin "Jahan Soz" (the burner of the world). He also took with him a large number of captives, put them all to death and used their blood for kneading the clay to be used in the fortification of the city. This event took place in 547 A.H.

Alauddin Ghouri left for Ghour after appointing a viceroy for Ghazni and Ghazni became a province of Ghourid Empire.

Since Behram Ghaznawi had acknowledged the leadership of Sultan Sanjar Seljuk, he dispatched a letter to him from India informing him of the events. Sanjar Seljuk conquered both Ghour and Ghazni the next year and brought Behram back from India to rule over them. He arrested Alauddin and took him to his country.

What Alauddin did to devastate Ghazni was out of a sense of revenge and retaliation that overpowered his senses otherwise; he was a farsighted, able and sensible Sultan. Sanjar was so impressed with the behavior and abilities of Alauddin that he set him free and he came back and took over the reign of Ghour. Shortly thereafter, the Oguz Turks arrested Sanjar and this diminished the awe and power of the Seljuks. Sanjar passed four years in captivity. But it was a confinement similar to king Jehangir's of India by Mahabat Khan. The Oguz Turks would seat Sultan Sanjar on the throne in the day and treat him as a king but during the night, they would put him into confinement again. Shortly after the captivity of Sanjar, Alauddin ousted Behram Ghaznawi from Ghazni and he died a natural death after a number of days.

Alauddin Ghouri should be considered as the first sovereign King of the Ghourid dynasty. His son, Saifuddin II sat on the throne of Ghour and was assassinated by his own Commander during a battle with the Oguz Turks.

Alauddin Ghouri's nephews, Ghayas ud-Din and his brother named Shahab ud-Din Ghouri had practical experience in leading campaigns and administration, were co-rulers like the two brothers Tughril Beg Seljuk and Chugher Beg Seljuk. Both Ghayas ud-Din and Shahab ud-Din lived in accord and amity and both were considered as kings. Shahab ud-Din regarded his older brother, Ghayas ud-Din as his elder and made it his sacred duty to carry out his wishes and instructions.

After annexing most parts of Khurasan, the Ghourids turned to India because they considered themselves the true successors of the Ghaznavid dynasty and thought it to be within their rights to bring under their control the entire territory ruled by the Ghaznavids. The Punjab was then under the rule of the descendants of Behram

Ghaznawi. Shahab ud-Din wrested the Punjab from them and he arrested Khusrau Malik Ghaznawi in Lahore in 582 A.H. and sent him to his brother, Ghayas ud-Din Ghouri in Ghour and he himself occupied Lahore and began to rule over it.

Ghayas ud-Din Ghouri died in 599 A.H. and was succeeded by his younger brother Shahab ud-Din. He had invaded India during the reign of his elder brother, Ghayas ud-Din and arrested and killed Prithivi Raj. He appointed his slave Qutbuddin Aybak as ruler in India. During his tenure as king Shahab ud-Din went to India. On his return journey, the Fidaïs or the Kakhars killed him by mistake. Following the death of Shahab ud-Din Ghouri, the Ghourid dynasty came to an end. Qutbuddin Aybak consolidated his position and laid the foundation of the Slave Dynasty in India. The throne of Firozkoh (south of the Central Elburz mountains in Iran) was occupied by Shahab ud-Din's nephew, Mahmud Ghouri, son of Ghayas ud-Din Ghouri.

Mahmud Ghouri was also assassinated in 607 A.H. His son, Bahauddin who was later arrested by Khwarizm Shah, succeeded him. Ghour was then ruled over by a number of nominal kings related to Shahab ud-Din and thus came the hasty end of Ghourid Dynasty.

### **Atabeks Of Shiraz**

Atabeks were the teachers to whom were entrusted the Seljuk princes for their education, training and learning of high morals. Gradually, these teachers or Atabeks rose to such heights that they were given the high post of ministers and rulers. In the wake of the Seljuk dynasty's decline, these Atabeks established their own sovereign rule in various countries and provinces. A number of Atabek dynasties remained in power in Syria, Iraq, and Persia and some of them attained eminence in the world of Islam.

During the reign of Sultan Sanjar Seljuk, Muzaffaruddin Sangar bin Maudud Salghari was the Governor of Persia. Following the death of Sultan Sanjar, he chose the title of "Atabek" and established his sovereign rule over Persia. He died in 556 A.H.

He was succeeded by his brother, Muzaffaruddin Atabek and ruled until 571 A.H. and his son came to the throne after his demise and ruled for 20 years.

Following his death, Atabek S'ad bin Zangi acceded and died in 622 A.H. after reigning for 28 years. Sheikh Muslehuddin Shirazi adopted "S'adi" as his pen name after Atabek S'ad.

After his death, his son Atabek bin S'ad Zangi acceded to the throne and it was during his tenure that Baghdad was annihilated by Hulagu Khan. He had accepted to give tribute to the Mongols and survived.

Following his demise, his grandson Atabek Muhammad sat on the throne. In short, this dynasty ruled over Shiraz and Persia until 663 A.H. but remained a tributary to the Mongols throughout. Afterwards, viceroys were sent by the Mongols to look after the administration of Shiraz. When the Mongols showed signs of decline and disturbances, Shiraz once again had an independent sovereign rule, which was then taken over by the Timur era.

### **Sistan Kings**

Sistan (eastern Iran and southwestern Afghanistan) is also called "Nimroz." King Sanjar Seljuk had appointed a man named Abul Fazl Tajuddin as the Governor of this country. In the wake of the degeneration taking place in the Seljuk Dynasty, he claimed an independent rule. His son Shamsuddin succeeded him but his atrocities attracted the hate and anger of his people. At last, his subjects mobbed and assassinated him and brought a man named Tajuddin Herb bin Izzul Malik to the throne who belonged to the same dynasty. He was good-natured and able. During his reign, Khurasan was a part of Ghourid Dynasty. He ruled over a span of 6 years and following his demise, his son Yaminuddin Behram Shah acceded to the throne but was killed by atheists. His son Nusratuddin came to the throne after him. His brother Ruknuddin staked his claim to the throne, which led to armed conflict between the two. Nusratuddin was killed by Ruknuddin and Ruknuddin was killed by the Mongol invaders. Tajuddin Herb's son Shahabuddin Muhammad then was seated on the throne as the last member of the dynasty but he too was arrested and killed by the Mongols and with him, his dynasty desisted.

## **Muluk Dynasty In Karat And Herat**

A man named Izzuddin Umar belonging to Seljuk Dynasty was the Minister of Ghayas ud-Din Ghouri. Ghayas ud-Din later sent him as the Governor of Herat where he built royal palaces and mosques. He came to be known as Izzuddin Karat. He was succeeded by his son, Ruknuddin in 643 A.H. They came to be considered as kings of Herat in the aftermath of the destruction of the Ghourid Dynasty. Shamsuddin Karat sat on the throne of Herat. He and his father both had offered their allegiance to the Mongols like the Atabekan of Shiraz. The Mongols caused no harm to their rule and left them to rule over Herat as their viceroys.

Ruknuddin, son of Shamsuddin Karat sat on the throne of Herat following the death of Shamsuddin Karat. Abagha Khan, the Mongol king had conferred upon him the title of "Shamsuddin Kahin". His son, Fakhruddin came to the throne after the demise of his father. Fakhruddin was succeeded by his brother, Ghayathuddin and Ghayathuddin by his son Shamsuddin in 729 A. H. Shamsuddin was succeeded by his brother, Malik Hafiz and he by his brother, Muizzuddin Husain in 721 A.H. He died as a king of Herat in 771 A.H. His son, Ghayathuddin Babar Ali came to the throne after him. During his tenure, Timur arrived in Herat and he rose to obey Timur while Timur gave his daughter to him in marriage.

## **Atabeks Of Azerbaijan**

Among King Mas'ud Seljuk's slaves was a man named Shamsud Din Eldeguz who was racially a Turk. He made a start as an ordinary servant but gradually, he rose to the position of a teacher and then began to show his power and influence in administrative affairs. At last, he was married to the widow of Tughril II and he became the Governor of Azerbaijan. He was then appointed the Prime Minister and Commander-in Chief of the Seljuk Dynasty and brought much of Persia under his control. When he died in Ramadan, his elder son, Muhammad Ata Beg became the Prime Minister and the teacher and guardian of Tughril III, who was then 7. Ata Beg enjoyed power for 13 years. When he died, his brother Qazi Arsalan was put in this high

post. He then assassinated Tughril III and captured the throne but he died the day he was to be crowned. Following this event Ata Beg Abu Bakr took over the reign and consolidated his position by confining himself to Azerbaijan and began to rule peacefully. Suddenly, Abu Bakr's brother Qatlagh Khan rose in revolt against him. Qatlagh was defeated in the encounter. He escaped and took refuge with Khwarizm Shah and persuaded him to attack Azerbaijan. However, a commander of Khwarizm Shah assassinated Qatlagh. Ata Beg Abu Bakr died after a few days and was succeeded by his brother Ata Beg Muzaffar. He also occupied Iraq and ruled for fifteen years. Finally, Jalaluddin Khwarizm Shah the last of his dynasty conquered Azerbaijan. Thus, the end of the dynasties of the Khwarizm Shah and Eldeguzid of Azerbaijan came at about the same time with the onslaught of Genghis Khan.

### **Alamut Atheists' Dynasty**

Hasan bin Sabbah founded his rule by capturing the forts of Alamut and Qazwin at the time when the Seljuk Dynasty was going very strong. Many things have been mentioned by historians about Hasan bin Sabbah. His physical strength may be measured with the event that when once his two sons disobeyed him, he grew angry at both of them and with one slap to each of them they fell down dead.

He led a very simple life and wanted the same life for his wife and children. Once, anticipating the Seljuks' siege of the fort and attack, he felt the need of shifting his wife and children to another fort. He instructed the officer in charge of the fort not to provide them food and drink like a guest and leave her to earn it herself by spinning yarn.

Following the death of Hasan bin Sabbah, Kiyabuzurg sat on the throne and fought with King Muhammad Seljuk until the death of Muhammad Seljuk. Kiyabuzurg then seized several forts of the Seljuks and plundered Gilan.

On the death of Kiyabuzurg, his son Muhammad took the throne. During his period, the Fidais began to kill kings and the celebrities here and there. When such events crossed all limits, the Persians appeared before King Sanjar Seljuk and cried out for assistance and the religious scholars also gave their fatwa (verdict) against the Fidais



and declared their killings as invalid. However, king Sanjar sent his emissary to Alamut to determine their greed and actions. An assembly was convened to make arguments and counter-arguments. The atheists defended their beliefs and actions with all the arguments at their command with the result that the matter remained undecided. King Sanjar practiced caution in ordering their massacre at large.

Three years later Muhammad bin Kiyabuzurg Umid died and was succeeded by Hasan bin Muhammad. He promoted atheism beyond all limits. When he died in 561 A.H., his son, Alauddin Muhammad came to the throne. During this period, Imam Fakhruddin Razi came from Azerbaijan to Rayy and began delivering sermons and wise counsel. He used to target the atheists' beliefs to keep people from joining the Fidais. In view of his campaign, they reached Rayy and threatened him with death. Following this, the Imam shifted to Ghour and joined Ghayathuddin Ghouri and his brother. Shahabuddin Ghouri had accompanied the latter during his journeys to India. He was appointed as Imam to lead the Muslim army in prayers. In the wake of Shahabud-Din's attachment with the Imam, the Fidais assassinated him in 602 A.H. Imam Fakhruddin Razi then went to Khwarizm Shah.

After Alauddin his son, Jalaluddin Hasan took the throne. He renounced the faith of his father and grandfather and informed the Muslim world of his conversion to the true faith. Following this he came to be known as Jalaluddin, the neo-Muslim (convert to Islam). Caliph Nasir Abbasi grew happy with him. Thus, when Jalaluddin Hasan's mother went to perform the Hajj, King Muhammad Khwarizm Shah's standard was kept behind that of Jalaluddin Hasan's mother. This was done simply to appreciate and encourage Jalaluddin Hasan. However, King Muhammad Khwarizm Shah took exception to this and this resulted in his campaign against the Caliph of Baghdad. Since Jalaluddin Hasan's son was only 9 at the time of accession disturbances and disruptions overtook the entire country. Nasiruddin Tusi belonged to this period. Muhammad passed away in 653 A.H. and was succeeded by his son, Ruknuddin Khurshah. Hulagu Khan attacked and arrested Ruknuddin and demolished his forts and with this came the end of the dynasty.

## Chapter 18

# **Brief Supplement Of The Islamic History Of Egypt And Syria**

Following the decline of the Seljuks, the Seljuk Dynasty itself broke into pieces and established several separate independent states. In the same way, Atabeks also set up their own states. Thus, there appeared a large number of small Muslim states in Persia, Khurasan, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Asia Minor. Konya was the capital of the Asia Minor rule, which came to be known as the Seljuks of Rome. This dynasty existed until the Ottoman Empire came into being. Similarly, an independent Atabek rule was established in Syria, which was known, as the Syrian Atabek Rule.

### **Syrian Atabek Rule**

Atabek Imaduddin Zangi laid the foundation of his sovereign rule in Syria in 521 A.H. when he died in 544 A.H. he left behind three sons Nuruddin Zangi, Saifuddin Zangi and Qutbuddin Zangi. Each of them set up separate states in different cities of Syria and chose Nuruddin Zangi as their emperor. Like the Seljuks of Rome, the Atabeks of Syria were preoccupied with countering the Roman Christian attacks.

Sultan Nuruddin Zangi was very brave, devout and good-natured. Bait al-Maqdis was under the possession of the Christian since 490

A.H., and they had founded their rule there. This Christian rule in Bait al-Maqdis had the help and support of the whole European continent. In spite of all efforts, bravery and determination Sultan Nuruddin Zangi failed to take Bait al-Maqdis from the Christians during his lifetime.

It was for Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi to fulfill this mission. The Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad had conferred upon Nuruddin the title of "Sultan" and credentials to rule over Syria. During this Sultan's rule, the Christians exerted pressure on Egypt. Thereupon, Azid, the Egyptian ruler and the last among the Ubaidi rulers sought Sultan Nuruddin's help. Responding to this request Nuruddin sent his commander Sherkoh along with his nephew Salahuddin to Egypt, within a short time the Ubaidi ruler passed away and Egypt came under the control of Salahuddin. Nuruddin Zangi died as well during this time period and his son Malik Saleh succeeded his father on the throne of Damascus in Syria. Shortly thereafter, Saifuddin bin Qutbuddin established his separate rule in Mosul and finally Syria too came under the possession of Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi. Salahuddin Ayyubi practiced favor and concessions to the children and family members of Nuruddin and they enjoyed ruling in Syria until the invasion of Hulagu Khan. However, they were rulers in name while Salahuddin was the virtual ruler.

### **Ayyubid Dynasty Of Egypt And Syria**

Najmuddin Ayyub was a Kurd by race and held the post of commander in the army of Imamuddin Zangi. Imamuddin Zangi was very kind to Salahuddin, the son of Najmuddin Ayyub and he had made some special arrangements for the education and training of Salahuddin. Following the death of Sultan Imamuddin Zangi, Nuruddin Zangi appointed Najmuddin Zangi as garrison commander of the Damascus Fort and his son Salahuddin as his helper. After the death of Najmuddin Ayyub, Nuruddin Zangi appointed his brother Sherkoh as the commander-in-chief and Salahuddin as the garrison commander of the Damascus Fort.

Following the death of Azid Ubaidi, Salahuddin Ayyub became the ruler of Egypt. When differences erupted regarding the accession after the death of Sultan Nuruddin Zangi, Salahuddin Ayyubi came from Egypt to Damascus and enthroned Malik Saleh, the son of Sultan

Nuruddin Zangi. From that day on Syrian rule came under the power and influence of Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi. Yemen and Hijaz also conceded to his rule the same year.

This was a most crucial period for the world of Islam. The united force of Europe invaded Egypt but Salahuddin Ayyubi stood like a mountain in their way. The Alamut atheists were on the other hand playing havoc in the region by killing Muslim kings, ministers, nobles and commanders. They had threatened Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi too with death but, by the grace of Allah, he escaped.

At last, all the commanders unanimously conceded Salahuddin as the ruler of Syria. And with this, he began to make all out efforts to take Bait al-Maqdis from the rule of the Christians. Following a heavy fight Salahuddin Ayyubi was able to capture the Christian King of Bait al-Maqdis on the battlefield and liberate the territory in 583 A.H. However, he set him free on the promise that he would never fight against the Muslims in future. Salahuddin then marched ahead and occupied Aakka and conquered Bait al-Maqdis in 588 A.H. From 490 A.H. to 588 A.H. a period of 98 years, Bait al-Maqdis had remained under Christian control. When the Christians had won it from the Muslims, they let flow a river of Muslim blood. However, when Salahuddin Ayyubi took over Bait al-Maqdis not a drop of Christian blood was spilled anywhere.

With the Muslim conquest of Bait al-Maqdis, the entire European continent was overtaken by a tumult of the worst nature and every Christian household raised a great clamor over the unexpected and ignominious defeat. In the wake of this historic defeat Phillip, the Emperor of France, Richard, the Lion-hearted Emperor of England, Frederick, the Emperor of Germany along with a large number of small kings, dukes and nobles built a huge army and led it to conquer the entire Asian continent and to wipe out all traces of Islam. They first targeted Syria. But Salahuddin Ayyubi with a comparatively small army fought against them several hundred battles within a span of four years and he did not allow them to touch the walls of Bait al-Maqdis. Defeated, disgraced and frustrated the Christians returned with their dreams smashed and souls shattered. Even at the height of these inimical relations, the kindhearted Salahuddin Ayyubi allowed them to visit Bait al-Maqdis as pilgrims.

During the previously mentioned battles, Salahuddin Ayyubi showed so much human feeling, generosity, kindness and dignity that, even today, European nations and the Christian world remember him with respect and consider his name synonymous with bravery and nobility. Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi passed away in 589 A.H. and was reckoned among the Friends of Allah due only to his piety, devotion and fear of Allah Almighty.

Following the death of Salahuddin his son, Uthman came to the throne with Malik al-Aziz as his title. He ruled for 6 years with a good character and reputation. Following his death in 595 A.H., his son, Malik Mansur came to the throne but was deposed after a year and was succeeded by Malik Adil, brother of Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi. He was virtuous and praiseworthy. He died in 615 A.H. He was succeeded by his son, Malik Kamil. He too was a king of lofty ideals and character. When he died in 635 A.H. his son, Malik Adil Abu Bakr came to the throne. Two years later, Egyptian nobles put him in confinement and seated his brother, Malik Saleh bin Malik on the throne of Egypt. He ruled for a decade but was martyred during a fight against the Christians. Following him Malik Mu'azzam Turan Shah Malik Saleh came to the throne in 647 A.H. but was assassinated after reigning for only a few months. After him Queen Shajratud'dur came to the throne in 648 A.H. and was deposed after a few months and Malik Ashraf was brought to the throne in 648 A.H. The slaves of the same dynasty in 652 A.H. deposed him and the Ayyubid dynasty came to an end.

During his reign, Sultan Salahuddin Ayyubi passed his days either in Syria, the city of Damascus or on the battlefield. However, his successors confined themselves to Egypt with the result that Syria slipped out of their hands and they had to be content with Egypt under their possession. The last rulers carved out a policy to purchase slaves from Kharjiah and Armenia to build a massive army to combat and punish any insurgent commander. Gradually, these slaves rose to such strength and power that they laid the foundation of Mamluk Dynasty.

### **Mamluk Dynasty Of Egypt (Category I)**

When the Ayyubid dynasty suffered a decline and all administrative affairs came to be managed by the slaves, they chose one Malik Mu'iz

Azizuddin Aybak as their king. He married Shajratud'dur, the slave girl of Malik Saleh Ayyubi who ruled for a short period. He was assassinated in 655 A.H.

Following his death, they chose his son Mansur for the highest position. However, he abdicated the throne after 2 years. Malik Muzaffar replaced him as a king but only for a short span of eleven months. During his tenure, Hulagu Khan attacked Egypt but was defeated. Malik al-Zahir Ruknuddin captured the throne by assassinating Malik Muzaffar in 658 A. H. He ruled successfully for 17 years and was succeeded by Malik Sayed Nasiruddin in 676 A.H. but he was deposed after one year. Malik Adil Badruddin was then brought to the throne but he too was deposed after four months. Thus ended the first category of the Mamluk Dynasty of Egypt in 678 A.H. In total, they ruled for 26 years. However, some of their attributes are worth mentioning. Firstly, they introduced the voting system and elected their kings by majority vote. Secondly, they repulsed all attacks of the Mongols who had once devastated the entire civilized world.

### Mamluk Dynasty Of Egypt (Category II)

It is also called the Qulauniyah Dynasty. After Malik Adil Badruddin, Abul Ma'ani Malik Mansur Qala'un was elected the king of Egypt and he was considered the first king of the second category of the Mamluks. He ruled for 11 years.

Egyptian territory expanded during his tenure. Following him Malik Ashraf Salahuddin Khalil came to the throne but abdicated it on his own after a few days however, the people forced him back to the throne and his reign spanned over 44 years and came to an end only after his death in 737 A.H. Malik Adil Katbagha Mansuri succeeded him but he did not rule for even a month. After him, Mansur Hosamuddin ascended the throne. He was assassinated two years after his ascension and Malik Muzaffar Ruknuddin was elected for one year. Following him Malik Mansur Abu Bakr was given the throne in 741 A.H. but he was sent into exile. Malik Ashraf replaced him but he was also exiled after eight months, and Malik Nasir Ahmad received the throne. Following his assassination in 745 A.H., Abul Fida Malik Saleh Ismail came to the throne. His reign lasted for not more than one year. Malik Kamil

Sh'abani ascended the throne in 746 A.H. but was deposed only after a few months. Malik Muzaffar Hajji was given the throne in 747 A.H. but was assassinated within a year. Nasir Hasan then acceded the throne in 748 A.H. He too was assassinated after reigning for 14 years. Malik Saleh then came to the throne in 762 A.H. and was deposed in 765 A.H. and was replaced by Malik Mansur bin Hajji and he too, was deposed after a tenure of two years and the throne came to Malik Ashraf Sh'abani who was assassinated after 11 years and was replaced by Malik Mansur Ali in 778 A.H. and died after 5 years. He was replaced by Saleh Hajji in 783 A.H. and abdicated the throne passing a duration of 8 or 9 years, and with this ended Qalaukiah Dynasty. This dynasty covered a period of 114 years. Category one and two showed no substantial difference in respect of style of governance.

### **Mamluk Dynasty of Egypt (Category III)**

It is also known as the Cherkesy (Circassian) Dynasty. Malik Tahir Barquq replaced Malik Saleh Hajji who belonged to the Cherkesy (Circassian) tribe, from northwest Caucas. Since kings from the same tribe later ruled Egypt, Malik Tahir Barquq came to be known as the first king from the Ayyubid slaves. His reign covered a period of 9 years between 792 A.H. to 801 A.H. and he was replaced by Malik Nasir who ruled for 4 years. Even though Timur made Egypt a tributary for 5 years during his tenure by and large, the Mamluk Dynasty remained safe. Malik Nasir was instrumental in setting up Hanafi, Shafe'i, Maliki, and Hambali prayer carpets at the Ka'bah. At the outset, religious scholars opposed this new arrangement but it subsided in due course for this step created no disruption in the religion. He was followed by a number of kings like Malik Mansur, Abu Nasser Sheikh, Malik Muzaffar Ahmad, Malik al-Zahir Abul Fath and Malik Saleh Muhammad who ascended the throne in 822 A.H. and abdicated on his own after four months and was replaced by Malik Ashraf Abu Nasir. He was a devout Muslim and loved to hear Quranic recitations. He ruled until 841 A.H. and was replaced by Abul Mahasin Abdul Aziz, but was deposed only after 3 months. Following him Malik Abu Sayeed, known as Malik Al-Zahir came to the throne and died after reigning for 15 years. He was very good-natured and gracious. He was replaced by Malik Mansur Uthman who was deposed in 857 A.H., after ruling for a few months.

Following him Malik Ashraf Abu Nasser ruled until 885 A.H. and then Malik Muayyed came to the throne but was deposed within a few days. Malik Zahir Abu Sayeed Khushqadam who reigned from 865 A.H. to 892 A.H. and died a natural death then replaced him. Malik Zahir Abu Sayeed Malyas then took over as king but was sent into exile after a few months and was replaced by Malik Zahir Abu Sayeed Tamrigha who was put in prison within two months. Malik Ashraf Abu Nasir then came to the throne and ruled till 902 A.H. and was replaced by Malik Abu al-Sadat who was assassinated after ruling for two and half years. Malik Ashraf Qalduh came to the throne after him but was lost after 11 days and was never found. Malik Zahir Abu Sayeed Qalduh remained on the throne until 906 A.H. Malik Hanbalat replaced him but was exiled within a year. Malik Adil ascended the throne in 907 A.H. but was killed after four and half months. Malik Ashraf Abu Nasser Qalduh then came to the throne and reigned over the country for 15 years.

Sultan Salim I Uthmani invaded Egypt in 922 A.H. and brought about an end to the Cherkesy Dynasty by defeating Malik Ashraf Tuman, and annexed Egypt to his kingdom and along with this ended the nominal Abbasid Dynasty of Egypt.

This third category of Ayyubid slaves, which is known as Cherkesy Dynasty, covered a period of 130 years. Subsequent to the Ayyubid Dynasty, three categories of the Mamluks reigned over Egypt for a total period of 270 years. In the beginning of these Mamluks, Hulagu Khan had devastated the Abbasid Dynasty in Baghdad, but in a very short time, as mentioned above, the Abbasid dynasty was revived by these Mamluks and continued until their end in 922 A.H. Even though these Abbasid caliphs were treated only like spiritual guides or figureheads they after all, held a unique religious status and were very useful to the Mamluks for no Muslim ruler would dare commit aggression against them. Similarly, the Mamluks never posed a challenge to the Abbasid Caliphate and they passed their days in peace and safety.

It appears proper to give below a list showing clearly which Abbasid Caliph corresponded to which king. It also should be kept in mind that a new king had to seek credentials from the Abbasid Caliph and a new Caliph was installed with the approval of the Egyptian king. Nevertheless, there were examples where some caliphs enjoyed such a strong position and power that an Egyptian king would not dare



oppose their installation. However, at times, relations between the caliph and the king suffered setbacks and fluctuations. The caliph enjoyed the support and sympathy of the Muslim masses while the Egyptian king lived by his power. However, King Salim Uthmani did away with such a conflicting situation and assimilated spiritual leadership and kingship into one and he manifested that.

### Abbasid Caliphs of Egypt

No.	Name of the Caliph	Year of Accession
1	Mustansir Billah bin Zahir Bi-Amrillah bin Nasir Li-Dinillah	659 A.H.
2	Hakim Bi-Amrillah bin Mustarshid Billah	660 A.H.
3	Mustakfi Billah bin Hakim Bi-Amrillah	701 A.H.
4	Wathiq Billah	702 A.H.
5	Hakim Bi-Amrillah bin Mustakfi Billah	742 A.H.
6	Mutazid Billah	753 A.H.
7	Mutawakkil Alallah	762 A.H.
8	Mustasim Billah bin Muhammad Ibrahim	778 A.H.
9	Musta'in Billah	808 A.H.
10	Mu'tazid Billah	815 A.H.
11	Mustakfi Billah	845 A.H.
12	Qasim Bi-Amrillah bin Mutawakkil	858 A.H.
13	Musta'id Billah bin Mutawakkil	858 A.H.
14	Mutawakkil Ali bin Yaqub bin Mutawakkil	872 A.H.
15	Mustamsik Billah	903 A.H.

Sultan Salim Uthmani conquered Egypt and Caliph Mustamsik handed over to him the scepter and other relics, which were signs of the caliphate, and pledged his allegiance to him. Sultan Salim Uthmani took Mustamsik with him from Egypt to Constantinople where he died.

## Chapter 19

# **Ottoman Dynasty**

We have now covered the early part of 10<sup>th</sup> century Hijri however, in order to deal with the birth of the Ottoman Dynasty, we have to go back as far as to the seventh century.

The plundering Turk tribes, known as Oguz and Ghazan Turks, had injured and eroded the prestige of the Seljuk Dynasty by entering Iran and Khorasan. Histories ranging from the Chinese province of Hanchu to Morocco bear witness to the adventures of these Oguz Turks. By capturing Sanjar Seljuk, they had sent people into terror. With the rise of Genghis Khan, their power had diminished considerably. Their remaining ability to strike awe in their enemies suffered a complete setback after the bloodshed and destruction caused by the Genghezids. They had already divided themselves into a number of tribes and foreign invasions made them spread widely in all directions. A certain tribe drifted to Egypt and joined the Egyptian army, while several other of their tribes left Egypt and settled in Armenia and Azerbaijan. Since no mighty king rose among them, history is silent about much of their activity. By virtue of their being in Iran and Khorasan as conquerors, they had imbibed the qualities of

mind and spirit and learned Islamic manners. However, even amidst power and conquest they had not given up the love of pastoral life. Therefore, most of these tribes settled in the green pastures and forests of Khorasan, Iran and other such countries.

When the Mongols invaded Khorasan, the Oguz Turks of Khorasan shifted to Armenia and settled there. Their chief was Sulaiman Khan. He and his comrades were devout and true Muslims like the Seljuks. The courage, determination and his behavior with his people attracted many other Oguz Turks who were still unsettled and this added to his strength. It was the era of Genghezhid invasions and plunder and every head of a family had to rely on his own strength and resources to withstand the onslaughts. In such a delicate situation, only their unity and solidarity could save them from utter destruction. Actually, Sulaiman Khan, by acting wisely and cautiously, not only added to his power and strength but also spared it for the future. The destruction of the Khwarizm Shah Dynasty provided him with an opportunity to make use of their men and materials for his own purpose.

Three years before his demise, Genghis Khan sent a huge army in 621 A.H. to invade the Konya based Seljuks. Konya was then ruled over by Alauddin Kaiqbad Seljuk. It has already been mentioned that the Seljuks rulers of this Empire continuously fought with the Romans (Christians). Now, with the passage of time, this Empire showed weaknesses and decline. When Sulaiman Khan came to know that Alauddin Kaiqbad was targeted by the Mongols, he felt very sad for the Sultan who was a Believer while the Mongols were Unbelievers. Moreover, the Konya kingdom was constantly engaged in holy war against the Christians while the Mongols had devastated the world of Islam.

Sulaiman Khan ordered his tribesmen to march ahead to join Alauddin and reinforce his army so that he could have an opportunity to be honored with martyrdom. Even though the actual number of Sulaiman's troops is not known, he sent his son Artughril at the head of 444 fighters as a vanguard. One of the strange things of history occurred on this occasion. These warriors in defense of faith were marching ahead from Armenia when, about the same time, a Mongol force appeared from another side to take on Alauddin Kaiqbad's troops. Now, as the battle between the Mongol and Seljuk forces broke

out and the Mongols were about to gain the upper hand Sulaiman Khan's son Artughril appeared on the scene with Muslim soldiers. He witnessed two forces fighting against each other and one party about to be defeated when he joined the weak and dominated side without identifying it and gave such a fierce fight that the Mongols were uprooted and they took to their heels leaving behind nothing but dead bodies. Alauddin Kaiqbad Seljuk who was facing certain defeat expressed his utmost joy over this sudden and most unexpected victory. He hugged Artughril out of love and thankfulness. Artughril on the other hand, expressed his happiness over extending timely help to his Muslim brethren fighting in the way of Allah Almighty. Artughril and Alauddin were still in an ecstasy of delight when Sulaiman Khan also reached the battlefield. Alauddin's joy knew no bounds and he not only thanked but also honored the father and the son with costly garments. He then bestowed on Artughril an estate near Angorah, present day Ankara, and appointed Sulaiman Khan as the Commander-in-chief of his army.

Alauddin's prudence is commendable when he gave Artughril the best piece of land under his possession. The Konya Empire was very vast. But, gradually, the northern and western parts of Asia Minor were occupied by the Romans and with their expansionist designs they were going ahead capturing one area after another. The Mongols had separated the southeastern areas on the other hand, and their thirst for more territory was going on unabated. Thus, the Konya Empire was being ground between two millstones. With the result, it was reduced to a small State and was counting its days to extinction. In such a situation, it was rather a wise step on the part of Alauddin to allot Artughril an estate bordering the Roman Empire and appointed Sulaiman Khan as Commander-in-Chief to stop the advances of the Mongols. Sulaiman Khan was campaigning against the Mongols and while sailing along the Euphrates with his troops and crossing the river fell into the river and succumbed to death. But Artughril kept going ahead with his mission of wresting Christian lands and expanding the borders of his own country. The King of Konya looked upon his constant successes with appreciation and satisfaction.

Alauddin Kaiqbad died in 634 A.H. and was succeeded by his son, Ghayathuddin Kaikhusro. In the wake of the constant Mongol

invasions, Ghayathuddin Kaikhusro was reduced to the position of giving tribute to the Mongols. However, Artughril was safe for he was governing a territory that was out of danger. The Mongols also had no time to turn to Asia Minor. Hulagu Khan, the grandson of Genghis Khan put out the lamp of the Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad in 656 A.H. A son was born to Artughril in 657 A.H. who was named, Osman Gazi (or Osman I which is Turkish for the original Arabic Uthman). This is the same Osman Gazi after who the later Turkish kings came to be known as Ottoman kings. Artughril died in 687 A.H. when Osman was 30. The King of Konya issued Osman Gazi credentials for ruling over the entire territory once ruled by his father. Being highly impressed with his all-round abilities, Ghayathuddin Kaikhusro appointed Osman Gazi as the Commander-in-Chief of his army and gave him his daughter in marriage. Now Osman Gazi settled in Konya and, in a very short time, he rose to become the Prime Minister and held the status of delivering Juma (Friday) addresses instead of Ghayathuddin Khusro.

### **Osman Khan**

Ghayathuddin Khusro was killed during a Mongol disturbance. He had no son but a daughter, who was married to Osman Gazi. Thus, Osman Gazi was unanimously chosen as the king of Konya. Since then the Empire founded by the descendants of Israel bin Seljuk in 470 A.H. ended in 699 A.H. giving place to the Ottoman Empire which continued until the recent past. Israel bin Seljuk was the person whom Sultan Mahmud Ghaznawi had confined in the Kalinjar Fort in India.

At the time of Osman Gazi's accession, the Konya Empire was weak and powerless and it was unable to withstand the two-pronged onslaught of the Romans and the Mongols. But Osman Gazi injected new life into the dying Empire and the secrets of Osman Gazi's success lay in his generous and polite attitude towards everyone. Osman Gazi was a devout Muslim on one hand and was endowed with bravery of the highest order on the other. First, he wrested the city of Eskişehir (Dorylaeum of ancient times) from the Romans and set up his capital there. This choice proved auspicious. Right after his accession to the throne, Osman Gazi had to deal with the enmities and

intrigues of his rivals, which he ultimately put down and silenced his detractors and opponents. Had Osman Gazi shown weakness at any stage his rivals would have rose in open revolt but his bravery, courage, determination and utter fearlessness stood him in good stead on every occasion. Thus, when the Christians built a strong army to invade Konya at the initial stage of his coming to power, Osman Gazi called his courtiers for consultations. On this occasion Osman Gazi's uncle the brother of Artughrij, an old man, expressing his opinion, said, "We must avoid conflicts with the Christians and keep peace and friendship with them because in case of an engagement with the Mongols other Turkish commanders will invade our country in support of the Christians and we may not be able to face the joint attacks of our enemies." Osman Gazi grew furious at these discouraging words of his old uncle and he shot an arrow at him, which led to his death on the spot. This horrible scene choked off the dissenting voices, if any. Thus, Osman Gazi launched a massive attack on the Christians and conquered and brought Eskisehir under his control; and shifted his capital from Konya to Eskisehir. Following this victory, Osman Gazi marched ahead against the Christians winning one city after another and forced them out from Asia Minor as well. Witnessing the surging flood of Osman Gazi's victories with utmost anxiety the Caesar of Constantinople in route to induce the Mongols to invade Osman Gazi's country from the eastern side. His plan was to turn the tide towards the Mongols. The plan bore fruit. Instigated by Caesar, the Mongol invaders began to launch attacks on Osman Gazi's country. But the victorious army of Osman was in high spirits and boisterous form bubbling with zeal and determination. Osman Gazi dispatched a part of his army under his son, Orkhan, a fighter matchless for his gallantry, to combat the Mongols and he himself rose against the Christians with added force and determination. Orkhan repulsed every Mongol attack and forced them to give up their mission. After the successful campaigns against the Mongols, Orkhan hurried to his father and the joint command of father and son left no choice for the Christians but to vacate city after city and the marching Muslim fighters and the flood of Muslim victories reached the coast of the Black Sea conquering Asia Minor rather easily. Orkhan, on the other hand, pushed the Christians back and conquered Bursa, which was a

magnificent city of Caesar of Rome situated near the western coast of Asia Minor. At the time of the conquest of Bursa Osman Gazi was on a sickbed in Eskişehir. When the good news on the conquest of Bursa came to him, Osman Gazi at once decided to go to Bursa. He asked his commanders to have him buried in Bursa even if he died on the way. However, Osman Gazi arrived in Bursa and died a few days after reaching there in 727 A.H.

Osman Gazi said addressing his son, "I don't feel sad over my fast approaching death for a worthy son like you is going to succeed me. Make it a point not to give up devotion to Allah Almighty, piety, mercy and justice. Your first and foremost duty should be to put into practice the codes of Shari'ah (the Islamic system of law)." At the end, he urged his son to make Bursa to serve as the center of his Empire. The choice of Bursa to be the capital also pointed to his wisdom and farsightedness. He knew fully well that a section in Konya was at enmity with his dynasty and they could at any time rise against his successor. He was also aware of the fact that the Mongols were against the Muslims not because of their faith and they were, bit by bit, coming into the fold of Islam. Thus in case of Konya being the capital unnecessary conflicts and campaigns would continue. Moreover, the Christian countries were a better field for the Muslim fighters. In addition, Bursa as a capital would serve as a deterrent to the Christians having expansionist designs. And, above all, Ottoman kings would find it easier to target Europe and conquer the Balkans. Osman was thinking on the right lines and his descendants followed suit.

Osman Gazi was brave and he was an outstanding horseman and a very handsome person. His power of judgment was unique and he could easily arrive at a decision in the most intricate matters and his opinions proved right. In beneficence and benevolence, he was matchless. His intelligence and presence of mind had no parallel.

The Seljuk kings of Konya used the crescent on their flags. Osman retained the Crescent on his flags and standards and it became his national symbol and it is an object of love for the Muslims even today.

Osman Gazi died at the age of 69 years and a few months reigning powerfully and magnificently for 27 years. His piety and abstinence may be gauged from the fact that he left nothing save his armor,

sword and girdle as personal property. This is the same sword, which used to be fastened to the waist of every Ottoman king at the time of his accession to the throne. Let it be clear that when Osman Gazi left Konya he brought members of the old Seljuk dynasty to power as rulers or governors and kept in tact their rights and practices that were enjoyed by them in the past. In other words, Osman Gazi had set up Konya as a principality under his rule that existed for a long time. This act of Osman too lends support to the view that Osman Gazi was, undoubtedly a noble, generous and farsighted by all standards.

Maktab-e-Ashraf



## Chapter 20

# **Ottoman Empire**

### **A brief note on Roman Empire**

Osman Gazi was succeeded by his son Orkhan, the second in the Ottoman line. It seems expedient to describe what led to the emergence of the Roman Empire so that the conditions leading to successful campaigns and conquests of Orkhan can be comprehended.

Nearly six hundred years before the birth of Isa (Jesus), a virgin from Italy named Silviya gave birth to twin sons. One of them was named Romulas and the other was called Rimos. It is said that both were born of the seed of Mars. The virgin girl, Silviya was the priestess in the temple of the goddess Westa where she was conceived by the god Mars. Shortly after their birth, the boys Romulas and Rimos were put in a boat on the river and the waves pushed the two to a forest or to the foot of a mountain. A female wolf came and suckled them and began to take care of them. Accidentally a royal shepherd appeared, lifted both the babies and produced them before the king. The Queen brought them up under her care. After having grown up, they laid the foundation of a city, which came to be known as Rome or Roma. Their descendants founded such a terrible and magnificent Empire that it is

counted among the greatest Empires that ever existed on the earth. Although the Empire founded by Römulus and Rimos disappeared, Rome is still the capital of Italy. At its highest point of power and development it was divided into two, giving birth to Eastern Rome and Western Rome. Eastern Rome had Constantinople as its capital while Rome itself was the center of Western Rome. Western Rome later came under constant attacks by savage people of northern Europe and Russia and lost much of its power and strength and, at last, it was also divided into two parts, Genoa and Venice. They had their separate governments, and with the passage of time, these two were also divided and subdivided into a number of independent states. However, Eastern Rome suffered fewer foreign attacks and a time came when Rome also came under the control of Constantinople. The Arabs and the Persians knew nothing about Western Rome. When the ruler of Constantinople confessed Christianity and propagated Christianity the Christian world held him in esteem and obeyed him. When almost all Europe came to the fold of Christianity, Caesar of Rome gained special prestige in Europe. When Christianity spread in Roman held territories, the Arabs and the Persians began to call every Christian a Roman. Since the Empire of Caesar of Constantinople was founded on the ruins of the Greek Empire and Caesar of Rome was in command of the territories once ruled by Alexander the Great of Greece, the Roman Empire also came to be called the Greek Empire. Since Asia Minor and Syria too were parts of the territory ruled by the Caesar of Constantinople, during the early days of Islam, Asia Minor was considered as a part of the Roman Empire. Even though Christian rule ended before long in some of these territories, its rule in Asia Minor remained for a long period. Thus, Asia Minor was popularly known and considered as Rome. When a section of the Seljuks set up their government in Asia Minor it came to be called the Seljuk State of Rome. When Osman Gazi I occupied most of Asia Minor, he also came to be known as the Sultan of Rome and Ottoman kings are referred to by this title even to this day.

When the Caesar of Constantinople accepted Christianity, this Christian state and the Magian state of Persia remained constantly at war with one another. These conflicts were still going on when the Islamic State in Arabia appeared on the scene and replaced them in the region. The Magian Empire broke into pieces and virtually ceased to exist shortly

after the advent of Islam but the Christian Empire of Constantinople survived the onslaughts of Islam for a long time.

During the times of the rightly guided Caliphs, the Christian rule of the Caesar of Rome was routed in Syria, Palestine and Egypt. And the Umayyads and Abbasids were constantly at war with the Caesar of Rome. Asia Minor had been the cause of disagreements between the Muslims and the Christians for seven hundred years. Sometimes the Muslims pushed the Christians back as far as the Danube pass (Iron Gate), and the Christians sent the Muslims back to Iran and Kurdistan. However, the reason behind the long stay of the Christian rule in Asia Minor was the feuds and civil wars among the various Muslim States.

But the Ottoman Turks did the needful and because of this, they became appreciated by the Muslims in general. The period we refer to here is one when the European forces had flooded the vast fields of Syria and Palestine repeatedly and every time they were driven back by the Muslim fighters. But, even though they lost battles, they enriched themselves with light and learning and something of the moral heights of the Muslims and used all these to educate and enlighten their own people. Thus, Europe embarked on a new way of life and showed signs of progress and development. The argument advanced by the European historians that the Roman Empire was then weak and negligent is quite misleading and a sheer travesty of facts. The Christians were then bubbling with rage against the Muslims and the Constantinople Court was playing a pivotal role in uniting the Christians for a decisive battle between the Cross and the Crescent. Constantinople was comparatively stronger and more powerful and knew the art of warfare better than most of the Christian powers. The Crusaders had brought all the warring powers together. Moreover, the Caesar of Constantinople used to establish friendship with powers antagonistic to the Muslims. Thus, Christian emissaries carried their mission of friendship up to China. They would offer even their daughters in marriage to attract their rivals to peace and friendship. Their heinous act of creating discord and dissension in the Muslim ranks and thus weakening them is not a new development of the present age but rather an old strategy. If the Muslims gave up feuds, civil wars and infightings no power on earth could stand in their way. Since Osman Gazi and his descendants were

fully aware of this plain fact, they always spared themselves from armed conflict with the other Muslim states. They kept their resources preserved for combating the Christians.

### **Orkhan**

Osman Gazi left behind two sons, Alaaddin being the elder and Orkhan, the younger. Alaaddin, although matchless in learning, insight, courage and determination, Osman Gazi was more impressed with the military acumen and fighting spirit of Orkhan, and so he appointed him as the successor to the throne. They were expected to fight for the throne. But Alaaddin, who deserved the throne, preferred the will of his late father to his own rights and placed the crown on the head of his younger brother with pleasure and pledged his allegiance to him. He simply wanted a piece of land in a village to pass the rest of his life in perfect peace. But his younger brother wanted something else. He entreated his elder brother, with the active support of his courtiers, to accept the role of Prime Minister, which he did after some reluctance. Even though it was not highly respectable to become the Prime Minister of his younger brother, he made this sacrifice for the stability of their dynastic rule. He managed the affairs so adequately that his name might top the list of the persons who held that post.

Within one year of his accession, he expanded the borders of his country up to the Danube Pass and ended Christian occupation of Asia Minor. He, with the wise counsel of his elder brother, issued and enacted such orders and laws, which played a principal role in organizing and regulating the administrative affairs of the country. Until then, it was the common practice that military commanders were allotted small pieces of land free of levy, for this they had to provide the required number of soldiers when the country was at war. Thus, each feudal lord had to serve as a commander on the battlefield. A large number of Muslims lived in Asia Minor. However, northwestern Asia Minor had a Christian majority.

### **Janissaries**

With the fall of the northwestern part of Asia Minor to the Ottoman Turks, a large number of Christian prisoners of war were brought to

their capital and many more Christians settled in the Muslim territory as *Dhimmi* (non-Muslim citizens of an Islamic State).

Prime Minister Alauddin put into the mind of his younger brother that the big feudal fiefdoms possessed large armies and often posed a danger to the central rule. The feudal lords could use the influx of Christians against the central rulers. Thus it appeared wise that the young boys from the Christian prisoners and subjects be brought up and trained by the central power and an army be built out of them after teaching them Islam. This army was to be considered as the royal army and they were not expected to rise against the state. Moreover, they could prove their mettle as devout Muslims and in such a case, their relatives would not think of going against their own sons who made up the royal army. When the plan was put into practice and several thousand young Christian boys, when properly taught and trained, rose to such a respected position, the Christians themselves rushed for admission of their sons into these training centers. When the first batch of the young Christian trainees was posted as the bodyguards of the Sultan, he took them to a religious scholler for his blessings. The sage put his hand on the shoulder of a young trainee and invoked Allah's blessings for the new recruits, which was taken as a good omen. The teachings of Islam and exclusive military training made them very pious and devout Muslims on one hand and soldiers of the top rank on the other. These soldiers had nothing to do with their relatives and they were solely the virtuous servants of Islam and royal bodyguards. This wonderful army eliminated the danger of revolt against the central rule and the commanders and feudal lords could not even think of such an action. Prime Minister Alauddin opened new *madrasas* (schools) in different parts of the country and the Christians were given the same rights that the Muslims enjoyed. They were given full facilities to carry out their trade activities and allotted lands for their churches. This graceful behavior of the rulers caused large number of Christians to enter the fold of Islam. However, they were free to make their own choice regarding religion and accepted Islam on their own desores with full understanding of what they were doing.

This Janissary force was very modern. Alauddin brought about certain reforms in the army, gave it uniforms according to ranks, divided

them into various regiments and made them follow military rules very strictly. One hundred, five hundred and one thousand soldiers were put under separate commands. The army was also divided into infantry and cavalry. A set of separate laws was enacted for the volunteers. Reforms were also made in the revenue department and separate civil and criminal courts in cities and towns were setup. Alauddin paid attention to the police and municipal departments. Tribes, which were fond of plunder and piracy, were given similar tasks to perform. They were organized as a separate force to be sent to enemy countries to terrorize them with their acts of plunder.

Prime Minister Alauddin paid special attention to construction works and built mosques, madrasas, hospitals and inns. He also constructed magnificent parks and palaces in big cities, bridges over the rivers, set up police posts along the roads and constructed roads to facilitate trade activities and military movements. He did everything he could do for the progress and development of Asia Minor and for the peace, integrity and solidarity of the country as a whole. For these reasons this territory remains the abode of the Turks and they are still going so strong within its bounds that no one could dare drive them out of this land.

The Caesar of Constantinople of the day had become disappointed with the loss of Asia Minor and the fall of many other occupied territories in Asia. In addition, he was apprehensive of the Turks landing on European coasts by crossing the sea. However, Orkhan preferred to consolidate the reforms and developmental works carried out by his elder brother Alauddin in Asia Minor than to expand their territory. He devoted twenty long and precarious years of his life to major reforms in all the departments of his administration. Had the following generations conformed they would have been ruling in Egypt, the Balkans, and Tripoli also.

Caesar's grandson rose in revolt against him. This civil war among the Christians proved somewhat advantageous to the Ottomans. The insurgents sought help from Prince Umar Beg the Turkish Governor of Iden. He crossed the sea with a fleet of 380 ships and an army of 28 thousand fighters and besieged the city of Demotika in Thrace, Greece. Afterwards, he took a detachment of two thousand cavalry soldiers and made progress into Serbia. Caesar held Umar Beg or

Umar Pasha back from helping the insurgents by giving him a substantial payment. Thereupon Umar Pasha returned to his province. However, Caesar's grandson went out of control, deposed Caesar and captured the throne. Following his death in 742 A.H. John Palaeologus ascended the throne of Constantinople. But, the late Caesar's grandson deposed Palaeologus and occupied the throne in 748 A.H. and ruled until 794 A.H. Two more Caesars replaced him until 857 A.H. after which the Turks occupied Constantinople. Soon after ascending the throne of Constantinople Caesar Cantacuzenus conceded Sultan Orkhan to be the ruler of Asia Minor and made all out efforts to establish good relations with the Sultan. Thus, Caesar sent word to Orkhan that he wanted to give his exquisitely beautiful daughter to him in marriage. Caesar knew that Orkhan was then 60 and his daughter was quite young. He was not unaware of the difference in religion. Orkhan accepted the offer and married Theodora, the daughter of Caesar. Thus, Caesar bought peace to strengthen his position militarily. But, eight years after this event, something strange took place. Venice and Genoa, the two strong naval powers clashed over coastal areas and ports. Since Genoa and the Caesar of Constantinople had serious territorial disputes both powers were hostile to each other therefore, Caesar wished success for Venice. Orkhan Gazi, on the other hand, hated Venice for its hostile activities on the southern coast of Asia Minor and Venice looked down upon Orkhan's Empire. Thus, Orkhan was felt compelled to lend his support to Genoa.

At last, Genoa and Venice the two entered into armed conflict near the Bosphorus Straits. Orkhan's son, Sulaiman Orkhan was the Governor of the nearby coastal province.

One night Sulaiman Orkhan took only forty men and landed on the European coast from a Genoese boat and conquered the fort at Gallipoli (Turkish: Gelibolu, historical: Callipolis) on the coast, which was a source of strength for Venice. Following this several thousand Turks joined their victorious prince at the fort. Genoa felt happy and encouraged at this new victory while the allies of Constantinople were greatly disappointed after this development. He was about to write to Orkhan to direct his son to vacate his occupation of the fort when Caesar himself faced a revolt by his other son-in-law. When Caesar

found his capital under threat, he sought immediate help from Orkhan. Sultan Orkhan wrote to his son, Sulaiman to leave the fort in return for a substantial amount of money. Sulaiman was on the verge of acting upon the order of his father when a violent earthquake erupted and the city wall of Gallipoli fell to the ground creating greater terror and panic among the citizens. Assuming it a support from destiny the two commanders Azdi Beg and Ghazi Fazil, accompanying Sulaiman crossed the broken city-wall and captured Gallipoli. Immediately after the seizure Sulaiman, had the walls repaired and deployed a strong Turkish detachment there. Caesar lodged a complaint with Orkhan against the occupation of Gallipoli Fort. Orkhan wrote back that his son with sword did not conquer Gallipoli. The possession of the city took place by an accident of the city wall falling because of the earthquake. However, he would write to him to vacate the occupation. But, since Caesar was constantly in need of military help from Sultan Orkhan and was himself involved in family feuds, he did not put further pressure for the return of Gallipoli and Sulaiman continued the occupation. The occupation of Gallipoli was very necessary to Sulaiman because it kept safe the western coast of Asia Minor from being usurped by Venice. Two years after this event, Sulaiman suffered a fall from his horse and died in 759 A.H. while hunting a falcon.

Sulaiman was a very promising, brave and wise young leader. Orkhan felt terribly shocked at his tragic death. Had he lived he would have succeeded his father Orkhan. It was, in fact, a severe blow for a father like him, who succumbed to his frustration in 761 A.H. at the age of 75 years, after reigning marvelously for 38 years.

Orkhan put his father's will and policy into practice with courage and caution and extended his borders up to the European coasts. Orkhan was wholly and solely interested in European campaigns. The reason he buried his son at the Danube pass instead of Bursa was that he didn't want the Turks to ever think of deserting the European coasts.

## **Murad I**

In the wake of his elder son, Sulaiman's death Orkhan declared his younger son, Murad as the crown prince. Following the death of



Orkhan, Murad ascended the throne in 761 A.H. at the age of 40 years. He had a strong desire to expand his territory in Europe but revolt in the Turk Seljuk State of Karaman engaged his attention and he was preoccupied with the affairs of Asia Minor. However, he descended on the European shores, conquered Adrianople and renamed it Edirne and made it his capital and from 763 A.H. to the conquest of Constantinople by Sultan Muhammad II the capital remained at Edirne. In the wake of the conquest of Adrianople the people of Bulgaria and Serbia grew anxious. The Caesar of Constantinople sent his message to the Archbishop of Rome to deliver sermons on the Crusade and dispatch reinforcements from all over Europe. The Christian kings of Serbia and Bulgaria also became alert. Thus, the united Christian forces moved towards Adrianople in 765 A.H. Murad I sent his commander, Lala Shahin at the head of 20 thousand soldiers. The Muslim force took on several hundred thousand Christian troops two stages ahead of Adrianople. This handful of Muslim soldiers gave a smashing defeat to the huge Christian army. They fled the battlefield leaving behind a large number of dead and many captives. Lala Shahin moved forward and conquered large tracts of enemy territory.

When the Christians witnessed that Sultan Murad I had consolidated his position in Adrianople, they made another attempt in 778 A.H. to end the Muslim occupation of European land. Thus, the united forces from Serbia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Bosnia, Poland, Constantinople and the Pope of Rome marched ahead to wipe out Murad I and the Ottoman Empire. The Muslim army was traditionally less than one-fourth of the Christians' joint command but the result was the same and the huge Christian forces had to taste an ignominious defeat. The king of Serbia bought peace with an annual payment in silver the availability one thousand horsemen at the time of war for the service of Murad I, while the ruler of Bulgaria saved himself by offering his daughter in marriage and promising allegiance. Caesar of Constantinople presented three beautiful daughters one to be married to Murad I himself while the other two were to become wives of his two sons. Caesar now cast out of his mind the idea of driving Sultan Murad I out of Europe. Overtly he was now making all-out efforts to maintain good relations with the Sultan instead. While covertly, he

was making secret efforts to get rid of the Sultan. With this purpose in view he bore the disgrace of visiting the Pope in Rome and seek his moral support and military help for the expulsion of the Muslim ruler. When his mission fell flat, he grew afraid of Murad I and to atone for this he sent his son Theodors to the Sultan to grace him by recruiting him for the Janissaries. Sultan Murad grew happy with this gesture.

During these days, Sultan Murad I had to leave for Asia Minor to put down certain revolts and uprisings and handed over the administration of his occupied European territories to his son, Sawji in Adrianople. In the absence of the Sultan, one of the sons of the Caesar of Constantinople named Andronecus came to Adrianople and instigated Sawji against his father Murad I after establishing intimate friendly relations with him. He first expressed his dissatisfaction over the attitude of his own father and then allured him into capturing power in the absence of his father who was then far away in Asia Minor. According to his plan, he first invited Sawji to move along with his army to make a joint attack on Constantinople and capture it and following the conquest of Constantinople, they would jointly capture power in Adrianople. Thus, the Christian prince entrapped Sawji with the lure of power. They jointly besieged Constantinople and declared their sovereignty. When Murad I came to know of this development he quickly managed the affairs of Asia Minor and rushed back to Adrianople. Both the princes hurriedly crossed a river and began preparations to take on Murad I. Having reached Adrianople Murad I wrote a strongly worded letter to Caesar Palaeologus to present himself before him and explain how such a silly and improper thing could have happened. Why did he create such a situation by sending his son to that of mine? Shocked and frightened he, claiming his innocence, gave word that he would side with him in all actions taken by him against the insurgent princes. On his part, he proposed that both the princes be arrested and killed. With this reply Sultan Murad I himself proceeded and encamped on his side of the river and crossed it alone and called out at the insurgent camp: "Those who come to me even now will be forgiven." Recognizing the king from his voice, almost all the soldiers came out of the camp and joined him. Thus, both the princes fled the camp along with a few Turks and Christians. But both of them were rounded up and produced before the Sultan.

He first called his son before him and had him blinded and killed. Caesar's son was sent to his father in chains with the message that he should punish him as he had himself punished his own son. Caesar found himself in a terrible dilemma, as he could neither kill his son by his own hand nor invite the wrath of Murad I. However, he preferred to please the Sultan and blinded his son by dropping acid in his eyes but left him alive. Murad I became happy with Caesar when he knew that his order was carried out and did not object to his son being alive. But in fact, Caesar's son had not lost his eyesight completely and he regained it after some time.

In 789 A.H. Karaman Turks revolted against Murad I in the western part of Asia Minor. In a fight near Konya Murad I's son, Bayazid made a quick charge at his enemy and routed them. Being happy at the bravery and courage of his son he conferred upon him the title of Yaldaram or Yil'diram (lightning). Since the Turk Chieftain was also the son-in-law of Murad I, his daughter saved her husband by entreating her father to pardon his fault.

Sultan Murad I then left on a visit to Asia Minor. The crusading spirit and fiery speeches of the bishops all over Europe had plunged all of Europe into a fiery fury against the Muslims and in the wake of the fall of Romiliya and some other territories, their blood boiled. Murad was sitting in Asia Minor unaware of these new developments throughout Europe that in Serbia, Bulgaria, Albania, Hungary, Glacia, Poland, Germany, Austria, Italy, and Bosnia they had united to annihilate the Ottoman dynasty. In 791 A.H., Murad I received the shocking news while in Bursa, that the twenty thousand troops kept at Romiliya had been exterminated by Christian forces. The entire occupied territory in Europe along with the capital, Adrianople lay under threat of European assault. With the receipt of this news, Murad I reached Adrianople and took charge of the affairs. In 792 A.H. Ali Pasha, the commander of Murad I subdued the King of Bulgaria and forced him to obey once again. The king of Serbia gathered the forces of the different Christian countries at the borders of Serbia and Bosnia and after setting up his camp there, he himself threw a challenge to fight. Murad I was also ready for a decisive battle. He assumed charge of his entire army and appeared on the

battlefield of Kosovo. When the Christians found the Muslim troops one-fourth of their number, they felt doubly encouraged. Since they had occupied the field from before, they had regained their freshness and energy unlike the Muslim army, which had arrived at the spot after continuous fighting and enduring a hard journey and were completely exhausted. Moreover, the Christians were well acquainted with the environs and surroundings of the area for they had friends, relatives and co-religionists there. With the arrival of the Muslim army, both the parties went into long consultations in their respective camps during the night. Some of the Christian commanders were of the opinion that the Muslim troops should be sniped at and exterminated before the daybreak. However, other commanders, filled with the pride and conviction of their victory spoke against this, pleading that a night attack would provide the Muslims an opportunity to flee in the darkness of night, and they did not like to spare a single soul. The Muslims, on the other hand, seemed awe-struck with the size of the Christian army. During consultations in the royal assembly, some Muslim commanders proposed rows of camels of burden to be set against the enemy fighters to serve as living fortifications. Moreover, during the fight these camels would strike fear into enemy horses setting their battle lines in disorder. However, Bayazid Yaldaram, the elder son of the Sultan differed for the reason that such a deceptive device was tantamount to declaring their weakness and fear. He wanted to take on the enemy in the open field. Thus, amidst conflicting views and suggestions, Sultan Murad I could not arrive at a decision. Furthermore, he experienced with anxiety the arrival of a strong dusty wind that had begun to blow against the Muslim troops covering their eyes and faces with dirt. It was certainly very injurious to the Muslim's fighting temper and spirit. Finding no way out Sultan Murad I fell prostrate, invoking Allah's help and succor in this hour of distress. His prayer continued until morning. He was crying in distress with his head touching the ground, saying: "This is the fight between Islam and infidelity; look not at our sins but protect the honor of Your Messenger (ﷺ) and his Righteous Religion". These prayers attracted the Blessings of Allah and it began to rain heavily by the evening settling the dirt and dust and making the

weather pleasant. The rain and wind stopped after a while and the battle lines were drawn. Murad I put the feudal forces to the right under Prince Bayazid Yaldaram and those from the Asian territories to the left under Prince Yaqub, while Murad I himself took over the command of his bodyguards putting them in the center. He then sent irregular horsemen and infantry as the vanguard. The center of the army on the Christian side was under the command of Lazars, the king of Serbia, the right wing was given to his nephew, the left to the king of Bosnia. Both the armies clashed and kept fighting firmly until noon. Sultan Murad I had an iron mace and was striking dead anyone who faced him. Now the Christian troops showed signs of yielding and were uprooted at last. The Muslim fighters expedited their assaults and rounded up the king of Serbia, the Commander-in-Chief of the Christian army. They fled the battlefield leaving behind hundreds of thousands of Christians dead and almost all the prominent commanders as captive. When the King of Serbia was produced before Murad I, he ordered to keep him safe in prison. But a Serbian commander's cunning changed the jubilation of victory into deep sorrow. While running with the defeated ones he, all of a sudden, turned his horse towards the chasing Muslims and requested them to catch him alive and bring him before their king for he hated Christians and liked to join the Muslim camp after disclosing some important secrets directly to the Sultan. Moreover, he had decided to embrace Islam at that time. Thus, the Muslims caught him alive and produced him to the Sultan along with others, narrating what led to his arrest. The Sultan grew happy and called him near. He moved ahead very respectfully and put his head on the feet of the Sultan. This respectful gesture convinced the Sultan and his courtiers of his utmost loyalty. Now, raising his head from the Sultan's feet he took out a dagger from under his garment and struck it into his chest. The Sultan sustained a deep injury and those in attendance tore the Serb to pieces. When the wounded Sultan felt sure of his death, he ordered the assassination of the captive King of Serbia, which was implemented at once. After a while, the Sultan succumbed to his injuries. Bayazid Yaldaram succeeded his father. The Battle of Kosovo proved beyond doubt that even the allied forces of all Europe were

unable to drive the Muslims out of their lands. Along with this, the battle put an end to the Christian invasions and crusades, for they had grown anxious for their own safety. The thought of conquering Syria had now left their minds. The Christians were now convinced that their numerical superiority was no match for the spirit and enthusiasm of the Muslim fighters. This defeat of the Christians is reckoned among the most horrible defeats they had ever tasted. This splendid victory rooted the Muslim's feet firmly and permanently onto European soil. The Christians of Spain and France who were once planning to put an end to the Muslim rule in Granada were now in a state of constant terror and gave the Muslims ample concessions and facilities of their own.

Sultan Murad I died at the age of 23 after ruling for 32 years. He was buried in Bursa. Murad I was a wise, courageous, devout and dervish like man.

### **Sultan Bayazid Khan Yaldaram**

In 793 A.H., the second year of his succession, Sultan Bayazid Yaldaram heard that efforts were on against the Muslim rule and that Serbia and Bosnia were on the verge of revolt. Bayazid hurried to Europe and annexed the territory from Bosnia to the Danube River and extended his kingdom from the Euphrates to the Danube in Walachia (a principality on the lower Danube River). Serbia and Bosnia had become tributaries of Sultan Bayazid. In Persia, on the other hand, the Mongol Genghezids had lost their unity and integrity and broken into a number of small states ruled over by various members of the Genghezid House and were at odds with each other. In view of Bayazid's power and grandeur, the Caesar of Constantinople wrote a letter to Bayazid that since he (Caesar) was then in possession nothing more than Macedonia and some small islands and these should be left to him in lieu of his sincere support for him. Bayazid Yaldaram granted his entreaty and left him free to rule his territories. Now, after buying peace from Bayazid he devoted his time and resources to hatching a plot against him. He sent his emissaries to Iran, Khorasan, Persia, Syria, and Iraq. He also attempted to establish friendly relations with the Muslim kings of Asia. The Muslim rulers of

Armenia, Kurdistan and Azerbaijan were, on the other hand, knocking at the door of western Asia Minor. Bayazid could easily crush the Turkmen of Asia Minor but his sense of Muslim brotherhood held him back. The Ottoman dynasty from the very beginning had made it their directive principle to avoid conflict with the Muslim rulers and devote all time and resources in waging holy wars on the Christians and transform them into a civilized and enlightened people under the influence of Islamic culture and civilization. Thus, Bayazid also followed this tactic of his ancestors and never showed any interest in conquering Muslim territories. But in the wake of invasions by the Turkmen into Bayazid's territories in Asia Minor he was forced to proceed to Asia Minor in 795 A.H. and brought peace to the troubled areas by defeating, capturing and killing his enemies. The same year Bayazid obtained the title of Sultan from Mustasim Billah, the Abbasid Caliph of Egypt. Thus, Bayazid became the first "Sultan" of the Ottoman Empire as kings before him were called "Amir."

Sultan Bayazid was a brave man with all the traits of a soldier. However, he absented himself from campaigns from 795 A.H. to 799 A.H. and kept confined to his old capital, Adrianople and other parts of Asia Minor. However, he came to know in 799 A.H. that the allied forces of Europe were making serious preparations under the command of king Sajmund of Hungary. France and England had also joined the European camp against the Ottoman Empire. Even though Caesar of Constantinople was totally behind their hostile activities, he could not dare stand openly against Bayazid. The Ottoman ruler dashed into Europe with lightning speed. He witnessed the European nations mad with rage against the Ottoman rule for the Pope of Rome had already issued his verdict that anyone joining the crusade would be absolved from all sins. A short time before that France and England were involved in war but the Pope and other influential Christians brought peace between them and turned the waves of war against the Muslims as a whole. A separate strong army from Burgundy was also sent to Hungary under the Duke of Burgundy to reinforce the army under the command of the king of Hungary. Besides a huge force from France was mobilized under three cousins of the king of France namely, James, Philip and Henry. Forces from Germany, Pomerania



(northwestern part of Poland on the Baltic Sea), Austria, Italy and Jerusalem concentrated in Hungary. The Christian king of Walachia (a principality on the lower Danube River) who had already offered his allegiance to Sultan Bayazid Yaldaram also joined the bandwagon when the Christian forces passed through his territory. However, the king of Serbia could only lend his secret support. Nevertheless, it deserves notice that the present Christian forces were not only armed to the teeth, it consisted of the bravest and most seasoned soldiers of the Christian world. The commanders of this army were so confident of their victory that they said most arrogantly and in one voice: "Even if the sky falls today we shall lift it at the point of our swords". The Christian army marched to the Ottoman Empire through two routes via Walachia and Serbia. Reaching within the bounds of Ottoman Empire, Sajmund, the king of Hungary and Commander-in-Chief of the allied forces ordered the invasion and the Christian troops began to conquer one city after another and every conquered city was reduced to ashes. Nobody was spared including young and old, women and children. Bayazid was informed of these reverses after a number of Ottoman cities had been totally destroyed. He hurried from Asia Minor to Adrianople. It was likely that Sajmund should have reached Andrianople by the time Sultan Bayazid would arrive and the latter would therefore suffer setbacks. But loot and arson on the way delayed his movements and provided Bayazid with many opportunities to organize his army and resources and to move ahead to face the enemy.

The Christians were still unaware of the approaching Muslim troops. When the spies communicated to Duke of Burgundy that the Muslim army was not far away, he left his lunch with other French commanders and requested Sajmund for an opportunity to be allowed to be at the vanguard.

Sultan Bayazid Yaldaram kept his forty thousand strong force behind an embankment so that the Christians could not measure the actual strength of the Muslim fighters. Following this, he mobilized his irregular detachment ahead. The French cavalry moved forward from the opposite side, while Sajmund followed it at a slower pace. The French cavaliers crushed the irregular Muslim troops in the vanguard and ascended the embankment in a fit of zeal after gaining an initial success. The Muslim detachments took advantage of the situation and



moved behind the French invaders on the embankment. Thus, the Christian troops in the vanguard were besieged and smashed by the Turkish soldiers and very few of them escaped death to tell the story of their complete rout. The Christian camp became terrified. Following this Bayazid launched a massive attack with such immeasurable zeal and fervor that it came to them as a great shock. Bayazid's army worked like an iron mace, which demolished the sand walls of the Christians wherever it hit. Even though Bavaria, Austria and Hungary fought with determination, the ferocious swords of the Muslim army did not allow them to live any longer. The battle, which was fought on a very large scale, came to its logical end in a very short time. Never before had such a huge Christian army been routed so ignominiously in spite of being so large in numbers and resources. Sigmund, the king of Hungary fled for his life. A number of princes, dukes and commanders were either killed or caught. The Duke of Burgundy was among the captives. Not less than one hundred and fifty thousand Christian soldiers lost their lives on the battlefield. Following the victory the Sultan came to inspect the battlefield and found it covered with dead bodies. Since he also found the bodies of Muslim soldiers as well, he while expressing regret over their sacrifice, showed his determination to avenge their blood. He then ordered the captives to be brought before him. The prisoners were divided into several parts. Ordinary soldiers were made slaves and distributed among the Muslim troops while others were put to death. The Christian commanders' both their arms were tied behind their backs and sent to some of the big cities to highlight the Muslim victory over the Christians. A section comprising of princes and dukes and sovereign rulers numbering twenty-five including the Duke of Burgundy was brought to the Sultan. The Sultan took them and came to Bursa, his Asian capital. He then called all of them and said, "You people unnecessarily took the trouble of invading our territories, and I am myself determined to invade Hungary, Austria, France, Germany and Italy. I have resolved to feed my horse at the altar of St. Peter. I shall, therefore, meet you in your countries and I shall be very happy if you come to the battlefield with greater preparations than you made for our last battle. Had I feared you in the least I would have released you on your promise that you will never rise against me. Instead I insist on you to go to your respective countries and plunge into making hasty

preparations against me." Saying this Bayazid set all the princes and commanders free.

Shortly after this, he hurried to Europe at the head of a strong army. He turned to Greece first, conquered Athens in 800 A.H. and dispatched 30 thousand Greeks to be settled in Asia minor. He then sent his commanders to Austria and Hungary along with troops and they won most parts of those countries. Being aware of the intriguing activities of the Caesar of Constantinople Bayazid decided to conquer and put an end to that Christian rule, but Caesar saved the situation once again on the promise of building a mosque in Constantinople for the Muslims with a Muslim Qadi (judge) to look after their affairs and provide all possible facilities for the Muslim traders besides paying a huge amount annually in tribute. Bayazid accepted to these conditions and left Constantinople.

However, Bayazid's conquests of Greece and Athens sent terror into the heart of Caesar and he sent an envoy to Timur (Tamerlane) with a letter delineating: "My dynasty exists from the days of old and we have been ruling Constantinople since the days of the Last Prophet and the Rightly Guided Caliphs. We have signed peace treaties with the Umayyads and the Abbasids and none among them ever desired to conquer Constantinople. But at present, the Ottoman Empire has annexed our territories and has its evil eye on Constantinople. In the wake of the existing situation, I find no way but to seek your help. Bayazid is making victory after victory in Europe and his power is expanding rapidly and, I am sure, he will invade your territories once he is free from his European campaigns and you will then find him a formidable adversary. Besides, Bayazid had given Sultan Ahmad Jalair and Qara Yusuf Turkman a place of respect in his kingdom when they had revolted against you and they have kept instigating Bayazid to invade your country. It is tantamount to showing utter disrespect on you when your opponent is so important and you are unable to do anything in this connection. Now it is the clear demand of the situation that you make no delay in launching an attack on Asia Minor and save me from the disastrous activities of Bayazid. I am ready to lend my help and support to you in your action within my power and resources." Even though the letter carried Caesar's selfish feelings and Timur was not so gullible to be entrapped by these words

the issue of giving shelter to rebels did not go out of his mind. Caesar's letter came to Timur at a time when he was staying at Haridawar on the bank of the river Ganges in India. Timur read the letter and sent back the envoy in a hurry without showing any reaction. Although he was planning to attack the eastern provinces of India, the content of the letter agitated his mind in a way that he lost interest in further advances and the consolidation of his conquests and hurried to Samarkand. In Samarkand, he made all-out preparations against the Ottoman Empire to establish exactly who was worthy of being called the conqueror of the world. Bayazid was on his mission to feed his horse at the famous church of St. Peter after conquering Hungary and Austria when he came to know that Caesar was working hard to join hands with Timur against him. Although he had no fear of Timur nor was he sure that Timur would fight with him in support of Caesar, he decided to teach a lesson to Caesar.

Timur, on the other hand, arrived at the western border of Asia Minor and created large-scale loot, arson and carnage in Azerbaijan and Armenia and brought a reign of terror all over the region. Now the frontiers of Bayazid's Empire were within his reach. In the wake of Timur's conquest of Azerbaijan Bayazid dispatched a detachment under the command of his son Tughril. But Timur practiced caution and instead of plunging into a direct fight based his strategy on slow movements towards the cherished goal. First, he dispatched circulars to all his occupied territories ordering his seasoned soldiers and selected forces to join his camp without loss of time. Moreover, he had a large number of men under the guise of beggars, mendicants, Sufis, sermonizers, traders and tourists to enter the frontiers of Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, he sent expert and experienced spies into the forces of Sultan Bayazid to contact the Mongol soldiers forming part of the Ottoman army and cavalry to instill in their mind that their real leader and ruler was none but Timur and, hence, to fight under the banner of Bayazid Yaldaram, the Turkish ruler was nothing short of treachery, dishonesty and dishonor. This secret invasion of Timur worked wonders, and a big section of the Ottoman soldiers lost interest in the victories of Bayazid. The spies also put into the minds of the Mongol soldiers that while they were victims of Bayazid's miserliness Timur was very generous in matters of his soldiers' salaries and general welfare and spoils of war.

Being satisfied with these preliminaries Timur thought it proper to first conquer Syria and Egypt so that Bayazid could get no help from those two countries. He then wrote a letter to Bayazid to hand over the rebel, Qara Yusuf Turkman, otherwise he would invade his country. Following this he attacked Syria in 803- A.H. After the conquest of Syria and Egypt, Timur marched to Baghdad and conquered it also. He was in Baghdad when he received the reply to his letter from Bayazid, who rejected his demand with utter contempt.

Timur anticipated such a reply and had set himself to make preparations much before his writing the letter to Bayazid. However, he left Baghdad in a hurry and reached Azerbaijan and devoted his time and energy to organizing supply, communication and intelligence departments anew. Bayazid, on the other hand, sent an army headed by Qara Yusuf Turkman to vacate the Mongol occupation of Syria and do away with Timur's Governors, and he himself marched to take on Timur.

Timur had invaded the frontier city of Sivas where Bayazid's son, Artughril was stationed as a garrison commander. Artughril and his troops shut themselves in the fort and fought a defensive battle. However, Timur besieged the fort and used his devices to break the fort. He dug under the very foundations of the fort from the outside. When pits were formed at different spots under the walls the wooden beams that were set in those pits were set on fire with the result the walls sank in. Thus, finding no way out the inmates of the fort surrendered and were rounded up. They were four thousands in all. As Timur had applied a new device to sink the fort into the ground, so likewise he used a horrible and novel way of giving punishment. Instead of sparing their lives he ordered that their arms be tied behind their backs and fastened their heads to their knees like a bundle and threw them all into the deep trenches dug for this purpose. He then bridged the trenches with wooden planks and poured earth on it. Thus, the captives were all buried alive.

When Bayazid Yaldaram heard of these inhuman atrocities meted out to his son and his four thousand soldiers he boiled with anger and lost his balance and this was exactly the reaction that Timur wanted to produce in Bayazid. It was a situation where Timur was practicing

calm and composure while Bayazid had not only lost his temper but his mental balance also.

Bayazid had the information that Timur had with him 5 hundred thousand selected soldiers. Bayazid was in great haste to avenge the blood of his son and so he took with him as many soldiers as he could and marched to Sivas where his son was buried alive and where his enemy was lying with his troops. Being informed that Bayazid was on way to Sivas with lightening speed, Timur played a trick and left Sivas at a time when he was sure that Bayazid could not change his route and shifted to Ankara and besieged it. When Bayazid arrived in Sivas, the sight of his son's burial ground turned him mad with anger and when he came to know that Timur had shifted to Ankara, which lay in the heart of Asia Minor, he could not put up with the loss of a moment to have his revenge. Had he practiced caution he would have first sent word to the Syrian and Egyptian commanders to make advance towards Timur, and he himself could have made all out efforts to cut all the supply lines of Timur. Moreover, he would have allowed Timur to move towards the western cities even at the cost of their destruction for those cities were thickly inhabited by Turks, the staunch supporters of the Ottoman Empire and could then target Timur on all sides. Thus, Timur could easily be surrounded and caught. But Timur expected no such acute sense of wisdom from Bayazid and he proved perfectly correct. Bayazid, in his fit of burning anger, rushed to Ankara with such a rage and speed that, out of 4 hundred thousand troops he could only arrive with one hundred and twenty thousand at the break neck speed he was traveling at and due to their continuous movement they were completely exhausted. It was a blunder that Bayazid committed and he had to pay dearly for it.

At the time when Bayazid reached near Ankara with his extremely tired army, Timur was there with his troops physically fresh and ready to combat his enemy. Besides, Timur had encamped at a place strategically very important and advantageous and he had dug trenches at various spots.

Bayazid came and, in order to show disrespect to Timur's military strength, led his troops to a high hilly spot to hunt wild animals. Thus, the exhausted army, instead of taking sometime to rest and regain

freshness they were overtaken by more exhaustion. In addition, the soldiers had to go without water with the result that about five thousand soldiers died of thirst and the rest became disillusioned at his whimsical behavior. On his return, Bayazid found that his camp had already been captured by the enemy who had also turned the course of the stream that was to provide water for the Turkish soldiers. Now the military acumen of Timur and his strategies had already won the battle. Bayazid was left with no choice but to lead his thirsty and extremely exhausted soldiers against an enemy much superior in number, strength, strategy, spirit and freshness.

### **The Battle of Ankara**

On Dhul Hijjah 19, 804 A.H. (July 20, 1402 A.C.) battle lines were drawn between Bayazid and Timur and troops from both sides came out to measure swords and the battle came to its logical end by sunset. Bayazid had to combat against five to eight hundred thousand fresh troops of Timur with his one hundred and twenty thousand exhausted and disillusioned soldiers. Besides, as was expected, the Mongol section deserted Bayazid during the fight and the Christian commanders showed weakness and timidity and turned the whole event into a disaster for the Ottomans. However, the principal reason behind this smashing defeat was Bayazid's shortsightedness and indiscretion. His idiocies and wild zealotry could not bring him anything else. Timur, on the other hand, showed patience, far-sightedness, military acumen and strategy of the highest order at every step. However, the backbreaking defeat of Bayazid caused immense and immeasurable loss to the world of Islam and Europe, which could easily have become a Muslim land but because of the defeat of Bayazid slipped into Christian hands.

Amir Timur had his battle-line as follows:

Prince Mirza Shah Rukh was put as commanding officer of the right wing which had forces commanded by Khalil Sultan-Sulaiman Shah, Rustam Birlas Sonjak Bahadur, Musa, Tawi Bugha, Amir Yadgar etc. Mirza Sultan Husain was heading a strong force to reinforce the right wing.

The left wing was commanded by Nuruddin Jalair, Barmazag Birlas, Ali Fanjain, Mubash'shere, Sultan Sanjar Birlas, Umar ibn Taban etc. and Prince Miran Shah was appointed as their commanding officer. The detachment to reinforce the left wing was under the joint command of Abu Bakr Amir Jahan Birlas and Pir Ali Salduz.

The right side of the main body comprised commanders like Tash Timur, Aghlan Uzbek, Ahmad Jalal Yusuf, Baba Hajji Suji, Sikandar Hindu Bogha, Khawaja Ali Airwi, Daulatemur, Muhammad Faujain and Idris Qarchi etc. while Beg Wali, Elchikdai Hari Malik, Arghun Malik Sufi Khalil, Esan Timur, Sanjar, Husain and Umar Beg, sons of Nekroz, Jon Arbani, Beri Beg Faujain, and Zirak Birles were given charge of reinforcements.

The left side of center was given to Tawak'kal Qara'qara, Ali Mahmud, Shah Wali, Sunjak Tankari, Bezish Khawaja Muhammad Khalil, Luqman, Sultan Birlas, Mirak Pir Muhammad, Shankram, Sheikh Aslan Ilyas, Kapak Khani, Daulat Khawaja Birlas, Yufus Birlas, and Ali Qabchag while its reinforcement was handed over to Muhammad Sultan, Pir Muhammad, Iskander, Shah Malik, Ilyas Khawaja, and Shamsuddin.

The above divisions of army apart, Timur took charge of the forty strong squads to be kept reserved for reinforcing the side needing it. Besides, he had employed a large number of mountain-like war elephants, which were put ahead of the army rows, while Bayazid had none.

Sultan Bayazid handed over the left wing to Sulaiman Chalpi, the right wing to his Christian brother-in-law, the brother of his wife, while he himself headed the main body and kept behind his three sons, Musa, Isa and Mustafa.

With the beat of the war drums, brave soldiers from both sides fell upon each other. The fight between the two was going on when Prince Abu Bakr launched such a massive attack on the Turkish army that it fell into complete disorder. Immediately after that, Sultan Husain made another attack on Sulaiman while Muhammad Sultan launched the third assault. Noticing reverses in the left wing of the Turkish troops, Muhammad rushed to reinforce Sulaiman Chalpi. The Turkish army fought so firmly and gallantly that the Mongols, despite their



superior number, had to retreat to a plateau. Bayazid, in a fit of anger, lost his head and the fact that he was the Commander-in-Chief of his army went out of his mind. Instead of keeping an eye on the entire battlefield, he kept himself engaged throughout with the task of driving back attacks of the main body of the Mongols and he achieved his purpose. Now, without looking towards the right and left wings of his army and taking care of their needs, he ascended the Plateau and occupied it by dislodging six major Mongol commanders.

Timur, on the other hand, had his eyes on every part of the battlefield and was watching every move without getting directly involved in the fight. Like a seasoned commander, he was pushing ahead and drawing back his troops according to the need of the hour. When he noticed Bayazid's victorious advance, he directed his fresh squads to charge at the right and left wings of his enemy with the result Bayazid was separated from a greater part of his army. At this juncture, the Mongol troops deserted Bayazid's army and joined the Mongol camp and caused great harm to the Turkish battle line. Now Timur had the opportunity he was waiting for. He ordered his army to make an all-out attack on the enemy with the result Bayazid's right wing leader was killed in action and his wife's brother, a Christian commander fled the battlefield in a wretched condition. Bayazid himself was surrounded on all sides. But, in such a crucial moment, Bayazid and his devoted soldiers showed their mettle with their swordsmanship in a manner that they alone could do. Bayazid alone was more than a match for the Mongols and pushed them back wherever he made his swift but deadly charge. At times, he tore apart Mongol lines and reached the spot from where Timur was directing his soldiers. Now the darkness of night enveloped the surroundings and Bayazid, the Turkish lion was captured alive falling from his tumbling horse, while his devoted fighters had already laid down their lives and with his capture were laid to rest all the hopes of the Muslim world to conquer Europe.

If nature is not transformed man has it in his nature to admire its nobility. In spite of being a beast, the lion is held in high esteem by everyone throughout the world. Man likes to be likened to a lion and even though the ox and horse are so useful, nobody likes to be compared with them. The fame of Rustam and the greatness and glory



of Khalid bin Waleed and Salahuddin Ayyubi center around their acts of valor. The event of Rustam's assassination as mentioned in *Shahnama* fills us with grief. When a valiant fighter meets with failure, we feel offended and Sultan Bayazid Yaldarm's capture on the battlefield of Ankara is a soul-shattering tragedy of human history.

Had Timur been defeated in the battlefield of Ankara it would have been the loss solely of Timur and his dynasty not of Islam as a whole. In such a case the territories under the occupation of Timur would have been given to another Muslim king and not to forces antagonistic to Islam but Bayazid's defeat was a total loss for Islam, for the Muslim's advance towards Europe came to halt all of a sudden, reviving a Europe that was breathing its last.

Had the result of the battle gone in favor of Bayazid it could be linked to the battle fought in the battlefield of Asia Minor in 463 A.H. when Sultan Alp Arslan Seljuk gave a severe beating to two to three hundred thousand Christian troops with his twelve thousand fighters or the third battle of Panipat where eighty thousand Muslim soldiers routed five or six hundred thousand Hindu troops. History bears witness to the glaring fact that whenever a small army clashed with a huge one the Muslim force was always much less in number but in the battle between Bayazid and Timur, both sides had Muslim fighters to combat one another.

Prior to this unfortunate clash one Muslim emperor named Bayazid Yaldarm had gone up to France and was knocking at the door of England while Timur, another mighty Muslim ruler had stormed the eastern world up to China and Japan and the marching steps of the Mongols had not been exhausted. There was none to stop Bayazid in Europe and Timur was more than a match for everyone in the east. Thus, almost the entire world would have watched the flags of Islam flying over it. But history had something very shocking in store for the world of Islam. The battleground of Ankara drew both forces of Islam to clash and it was the ground where the hopes of European conquest were laid to rest forever.

Bayazid's son, Musa was also captured with his father while Princes Muhammad and Isa fled the battlefield for life. Timur put Bayazid in

an iron cage and kept him so through out his journeys. To keep in such a disgraceful confinement a mighty king like Bayazid and to put his defeat and dishonor on display did not befit a brave fighter and great king like Timur. His treatment was much below the standard of a valiant soldier and noble soul. Brave and noble minded persons show great respect to their worst enemies particularly when they are at their mercy. When Alp Arslan Sejuk arrested the Caesar of Constantinople on the battleground of Maladhkurd, he released him with due honors and restored the occupied country to him. When the Raja of Punjab was arrested and produced before Alexander of Greece, he was not only released with honor and given back his rule but was allotted even more. Bayazid himself had arrested twenty-five princes on the battlefield of Nicopolis but set them free asking them to make more preparations for another round.

Unfortunately, the treatment meted out to a matchless fighter like Bayazid is a scar on the face of Timur. Although Timur had kept Bayazid, the Ottoman lion, in a manner a lion is kept in a cage it is not an acceptable sort of poetic simile. The point is that the good sense of Timur could not make a difference between man and animal.

The insult and indignity that Bayazid had to bear in the wake of his setback in Ankara was so heavy that he did not remain alive for more than eight months. The only act of grace on the part of Timur was that he handed over the dead body of Bayazid to his son, Musa and released him to take it to be buried in Bursa.

Timor's military activities remained centered on plundering Muslim territories and he never found in him a desire to wage war against the non-Muslims and propagate Islam in their territories. However, Timur also did not live long after the tragic death of Bayazid. He arrived in Samarkand and marched ahead to conquer China, his only campaign against a non-Muslim country, but Allah Almighty did not allow him to accomplish it, and he died on the way.

### **Bayazid's Sons at War**

Following the defeat at Ankara there was, apparently, no hope of the survival of the Ottoman Empire, for Timur had distributed among the

Seljuks the small states of Asia Minor ruled by them prior to the conquest of Bayazid Yaldaram. In some parts, Timur had carved out new States.

When leaving for Asia Minor to fight with Timur, Bayazid had left his son, Sulaiman in Adrianople as his deputy. The Turkish disaster in the battle of Ankara encouraged the Christians to restore their lost territory, with the result all the occupied parts save Adrianople and its suburbs slipped out of the Ottoman Empire. The Caesar of Constantinople too, who was restlessly awaiting the outcome of the battle, found in himself a burning desire to expand his territory. Although apparently at peace, the Christian powers were still under the psychological fear arising out of their defeats and disasters in the past and hence they could not muster courage enough to force the Ottomans from Adrianople. Except for small pieces of European land and Asia Minor, the Ottoman Empire had lost everything. And, to add fuel to the fire, Bayazids' sons rose against each other in internecine fighting for the throne.

Bayazid Yaldaram had seven or eight sons and five or six had survived the Battle of Ankara. Sulaiman was substituting for his father in Adrianople; Musa was in prison along with his father; Isa who fled Ankara to Bursa had become its ruler; Muhammad, the youngest and the most worthy son of Bayazid was still ruling over a city in Asia Minor; and Qasim who was totally devoid of courage and determination lived with either Muhammad or Isa. Thus in the wake of Bayazid's captivity, Muhammad and Isa had their separate rules in the remaining Ottoman territories, while Sulaiman was in possession of the European territory under Ottoman rule.

Isa and Muhammad clashed with one another to establish their claim over all the parts of Asia Minor under Ottoman administration. After a fierce fight, Muhammad defeated Isa and the latter fled Asia Minor and joined his brother, Sulaiman in Adrianople. He then pressed Sulaiman to win his lost territory for him. Sulaiman captured Bursa and Ankara. What a misfortune that Bayazid's sons were at war with one another at a time when he was suffering captivity at the hands of Timur. Amid their burning desire to capture power, they must have forgotten their father passing his days in disgrace.

During the days Sulaiman was fighting with Muhammad in Asia Minor Bayazid Yaldaram breathed his last in a state of utter distress and Musa was carrying the dead body of his father home. Unfortunately, a Seljuk squad of Qarmania arrested Musa on the way. On hearing this, Muhammad wrote the Seljuk ruler to act gracefully to release his brother, Musa so that he, along with Musa, could fight with Sulaiman. The Seljuk ruler granted his submission without loss of time in order to gain benefit from the infighting of the Ottoman camp. Musa joined his brother, Muhammad immediately after the burial of his father. Since Musa had accompanied his father, Bayazid during his days in captivity, Ottoman nobles and soldiers held him in great veneration and Muhammad felt more encouraged and powerful and the battlefields of Asia Minor began to spit fire and blood. Muhammad and Musa on one side and Sulaiman and Isa on the other, each was thirsty of one another's blood. At last, Isa lost his life but Sulaiman fought firmly and did not allow his brothers to win the battle. Finding no way out Musa asked his brother Muhammad to give him a detachment to conquer the Ottoman occupied territories in Europe so that Sulaiman should turn to his European possessions giving up his campaigns in Asia Minor. Muhammad liked this suggestion and Musa reached Adrianople with his troops. As expected, Sulaiman rushed to the spot with the result a fierce battle broke out between Musa and Sulaiman. Sulaiman being the elder son and claiming for himself all the territories under Ottoman rule would not do any favors for his military commanders to keep them happy and spirited. Since Musa and Muhammad were making all out efforts to wrest power from Sulaiman but considered their claim weaker owing to their being younger, they showed more respect to the feelings of their commanders and kept them emotionally attached to their cause, with the result they preferred Musa to Sulaiman and brought about the defeat of Sulaiman. Defeated and dejected, Sulaiman was going to the Caesar of Constantinople when he was captured and assassinated on the way in 813 A.H. Now only two brothers were left to rule and thus the European part of the Ottoman rule went to Musa and Muhammad occupied the Asian Territory.

Musa then decided to punish the Caesar of Constantinople for his support of Sulaiman but he first turned to Stephen, the ruler of Serbia

for he had favored Sulaiman openly. He invaded Serbia and gave it a smashing defeat with the result the Christians were overtaken by great terror. This victory won by Musa removed from the Christian mind any thought about the weakness of the Ottomans. Following this Musa besieged Constantinople.

Caesar was very shrewd and alert. During this period, Musa was engaged in Serbia, he established very cordial relations with Muhammad who was then ruling over some parts of Asia Minor and annexing the small States carved out by Timur. Even though Musa and Muhammad were in agreement to rule over European and Asian territories respectively, Caesar's clever moves turned Muhammad against Musa. In the wake of his country being under siege, Caesar requested Muhammad to come to his help. Muhammad having the least regard for brotherly relations reached there with his army to raise the siege. Thus, the European and Asian Turks stood face to face and both were ready to do combat when Mohammed was informed that one of his commanders had revolted against him. Thus, he rushed back to Asia Minor to put down the uprising. This revolt had taken place at the instance of Musa who wanted him to go back without extending his help to the Christian ruler. In his absence, Musa narrowed down his siege and Caesar found himself in great trouble. Muhammad put down the revolt and returned to Constantinople and wrote to Stephen, the King of Serbia to take up arms against Musa and assured him of his support. The king of Serbia rose against him and Musa raised the siege of Constantinople and rushed to Serbia. Muhammad chased him. Musa was killed in comb at with Muhammad and serbian king. Muhammad sat on the throne of Adrianople. He was now the only ruler of the entire Ottoman conquered territories. Now all civil wars ended for there was none to challenge him. However, Muhammad made it a point to establish his allegiance to his commanders, forces and subjects and, in order to do away with the least possibility of insurgence against him, he blinded his brother Qasim, who lived in Bursa and his nephew, the son of Sulaiman. These events took place in 816 A.H. It is, without doubt, one of the wonders of history how a dynasty, torn by eleven years of civil wars and family strife not only survived but also rose so powerfully.

## **Sultan Muhammad I**

Sultan Muhammad, son of Bayazid Yaldaram ascended the throne in Adrianople in 816 A.H. He began to run the administration with wisdom and sagacity. He had already established cordial relations with the Caesar of Constantinople and the Christian King of Serbia. Hence, both of them conveyed their facilitations on Muhammad's coronation and sent him precious gifts. Muhammad, also in token of friendship and harmony, granted a number of concessions to the king of Serbia and gave away to the Caesar of Constantinople some such territories in the absence of which he felt perturbed. The democratic State of Venice, a mighty naval power and at enmity with the Turks, extended its hands of friendship in the wake of the Ottoman King's fame as a peace-loving ruler. Sultan Muhammad warmly welcomed this move. States like Walachia, Albania, and Bosnia had declared their sovereignty in the wake of the Ottoman setback in Ankara. But now all these Christian States were anxious for their safety and hence each of them sent its felicitation to the new Ottoman ruler through their emissaries. He greeted each of them warmly and told them while saying goodbye, "All of you should tell your masters that I offer peace to one and all and accept their peace offer as well. Allah Almighty loves peace and hates disturbances". With the expression of this friendly gesture, peace returned to Europe. In truth, the Ottoman Rule, which had very recently recovered from a long spell of illness, needed rest and a controlled diet and the wisdom and patience of Sultan Muhammad provided it in ample measure. Every step taken by him was directed towards consolidation of power and integrity.

But uprisings in Asia Minor were going on unchecked. At last, Muhammad marched to punish the insurgents. First of all, he put down the revolt in Smyrna (Izmir) and then silenced his enemies in Fermania. He then established peaceful relations with those states formed after the demise of Timur and which bordered the eastern part of the Ottoman territory. Thus, peace prevailed in the entire region of Asia Minor. On the return journey the Sultan's war fleet clashed with that of Venice and the Ottoman fleet had to sustain damage but a fresh agreement of peace was duly signed and normalcy returned.

Sultan Muhammad believed in internal strength and consolidation of power instead of expansion of territories. After winning peace, he paid his attention to the public welfare. He set up madrasas (schools) and extended honor to religious scholars. He brought peace and safety to the routes and thoroughfares and set trading activities in motion. Thus, his actions and activities brought him admiration both of friends and foes.

But, despite all this, his rule was also overtaken by strife of the worst nature. The man responsible for these disturbances was Qadi Badruddin.

It is said that a new-Muslim Jew turned apostate launched a movement that the Sultan be deposed and democracy adopted. The movement got the support of Qadi Badruddin. They jointly put an uneducated man named, Mustafa as their religious leader and launched their thoughts all over Asia and Europe. Thus, the movement gathered momentum and caused anxiety to Muhammad. It gained popularity among the Muslim masses particularly because they disliked their ruler's friendship and amity with the Christian powers. However, they didn't have the slightest idea that for the stability of Ottoman dynasty, a policy of peaceful relations with the Christian powers was the need of the hour, with the result, they were easily carried away by the ideas of revolt from the elements antagonistic to Ottoman rule. However, Muhammad stood against the poisonous campaign and put an end to it in a short time and all the three protagonists of democracy had to pay the price with their lives. Shortly after that, Muhammad had to face another trouble.

Mustafa, a son of Bayazid was killed in the battle of Ankara. But his body remained traceless. Even the search party sent by Timur returned without success. Thus, the killing of Mustafa became doubtful. Now, during the tenure of Sultan Muhammad in 824 A.H. a man staked his claim in Asia Minor to the Ottoman throne asserting that he was Mustafa, the son of Bayazid Yaldaram. Since he happened to resemble Mustafa, many Turks recognized his claim. The Ottoman Governors of Smyrna and Walachia joined the bandwagon for they were not happy with Muhammad. Aided and abetted by them the said Mustafa came to Gallipoli and captured a territory near Thasli. Muhammad rushed to the troubled spot and Mustafa fled to

Constantinople after being thoroughly beaten. Muhammad wrote to the king of Constantinople to send back Mustafa, the rebel. But Caesar refused to do so but promised to keep him safe in custody provided he keep sending him an amount to be spent on his maintenance. Since Muhammad was worried about insurgence here and there and didn't want to add to his trouble by coming into conflict with Christian powers, he accepted the demand and without showing any dissatisfaction, he moved ahead with his plans to establish better relations with Caesar and worked out a personal visit to Constantinople. Caesar also greeted him warmly and honorably. They together renewed the old agreement of peace and friendship. Following this, Muhammad left for Gallipoli where he passed away in 825 A.H.

### **A Review of Muhammad's Reign**

Muhammad was 27 at the time of the Battle of Ankara. After the battle, he became the sovereign ruler of Amisiah, a town in Asia Minor and came into clashes with his brothers. In the wake of fighting with his brothers for eleven long years, he overpowered all others and ascended to the Ottoman throne. His 8-years tenure was beset with strife and disruptions. His soft policy and wise steps saved a dying Empire. Because of this some historians have called him the Noah of the Ottoman Dynasty.

**Sultan Muhammad** I was the first Ottoman king who fixed an annual grant for the maintenance of the House of Allah, the Ka'bah and for the poor and the needy Makkans. This sacred service of his attracted from the Abbasid Caliph, Mu'tazid Billah the enviable title of the custodian of the Sanctuaries of Makkah and Madinah. This title rose to such a height with the passage of time that the Ottoman rulers came to be called the Caliphs of the Muslims.

Sultan Muhammad died when he was 47. His son, Murad II, who was then 18, was proving his worth as the commander of the Ottoman Army in Asia Minor. The Ottoman ministers concealed the death of the Sultan Muhammad for 40 days and during this period, they sent couriers to Murad II to post him with the loss and bring him back to the capital for his coronation as the king of Ottoman Dynasty.



Following this, the body of the deceased was carried from Gallipoli to Bursa and was laid to rest.

## Murad II

Sultan Murad II was born in 806 A.H. and ascended the throne in Adrianople. Shortly after ascension, the young Sultan was beset with difficulties and dangers. On hearing about the death of Sultan Muhammad, the Caesar of Constantinople called Mustafa from his confinement and had him to write a bond declaring that in case he became the ruler of the Ottoman territories he would hand over such and such strongholds to him (Caesar) and would ever act as a well-wisher of the Constantinople administration.

In the wake of the agreement, Caesar gave Mustafa a war fleet and they landed on the eastern part of the Ottoman Empire to occupy that area. Since his claim of being the son of Bayazid had not been decided as yet a large number of Ottoman soldiers joined him and added to his strength, with the result he went on winning city after city. The major part of the army sent to fight Mustafa joined his camp and the rest fled back after a thorough beating. Following this reverse Sultan Murad sent his commander, Bayazid Pasha at the head of an army to punish the rebels. But Bayazid Pasha was killed on the battlefield and his army was routed. This victory encouraged Mustafa beyond all limits. He was also very sure of help from Caesar as well as the Christian kings of the West against Murad and after his conquest of Asia Minor, he would be able to dislodge him from power. With this purpose in view, he began to storm Asia Minor. Murad II himself led his army to Asia Minor without delay and beat Mustafa. At this time, the Turkish soldiers had distanced themselves from the false claim of Mustafa and joined Murad. In view of the lurking danger around him, he fled Asia Minor and occupied Thasil in Gallipoli. Murad came chasing him to Gallipoli and routed his military strength. Mustafa fled to Adrianople to capture it but he was caught and hanged to death.

Shortly after Sultan Murad II turned to Genoa and signed a peace agreement with it because of its rivalry with Constantinople. Following this he started massive preparations against Constantinople. On hearing this news, Caesar grew anxious. He had, until now, escaped

all such troubles by various crafty devices. But, finding no other means to save his country this time, he sent his emissary to Murad to seek forgiveness for his fault of lending his help to Mustafa. However, Sultan Murad returned the envoy with contempt.

Following this Murad reached Constantinople in 826 A.H. (June, 1422 A.C.) at the head of a 20 thousand-man army and laid his siege around Constantinople. Even though the occupation of Constantinople was not an easy job his expert use of explosive mines, catapults and moving towers brought him very near to success. Caesar too was clever to accept his defeat very easily. He had his own secret plans to cause armed insurgence in Asia Minor. Thus, Murad had to raise his siege of Constantinople and rush to Asia Minor when he was near to victory, like his grandfather who had raised his siege of Constantinople to hurry to Asia Minor to take on Timur.

Muhammad was survived by four sons two young and two of tender age. The eldest among them, Murad II was 18 and the next one, Mustafa was 15 at the time of Muhammad's death. After ascension, Murad II sent his youngest brothers to Bursa for upbringing and education and his brother Mustafa, younger than him by three years, to Asia Minor, as a governor or commander.

When Murad II got rid of his so called uncle, Mustafa, the Caesar of Constantinople started his efforts to bring the next Mustafa round to his view and kept convincing him through his emissaries and spies that he supported his right to the throne and he would lend all help in case he staked his claim. He then began to persuade the Seljuk commanders stationed in Konya and other cities as the feudal lords of the Ottoman Empire and most of them were related to the ruling family, to rise against Murad II and in favor of Mustafa, the brother of Murad and his efforts brought fruits.

At last, Mustafa took up arms against the Ottoman Empire with the active support of the Seljuk commanders. Thus, when Murad II was about to conquer Constantinople, Mustafa very hastily occupied a number of cities of Asia Minor and besieged Bursa. In view of the prevailing situation, the Ottoman troops in Asia Minor joined the camp of Mustafa. When Murad witnessed that Asia Minor was gradually slipping out of his hands, he grew anxious and rushed to

the troubled spot to put a check on the advancement of his enemy. With the arrival of Murad II, the major part of Mustafa's army changed sides and returned to Murad's camp. Thus, Mustafa was beaten and killed and peace staged a comeback in Asia Minor. Following this victory, Murad was stationed in Asia Minor for about a year to punish all the insurgent elements and bring about complete peace and safety in the region. When Sultan Murad II came to Europe, the Caesar of Constantinople bought peace from him at the cost of paying 30 thousand Ducats annually.

Being free from these campaigns Murad II devoted himself whole heartedly to the welfare of his subjects and the development of his country and kept from any campaigns against Christian or non-Christian powers. However, he kept them following their agreements.

The King of Serbia, loyal and tributary to the Ottoman Empire, died in 831 A.H. and was succeeded by George Bernick. The new king was not so sober and farsighted, hence, the Caesar of Constantinople had an opportunity to hatch secret plots against the Ottoman rule with the help of the Serbian and Hungarian administrations.

After the fall of Venice to Murad II, Caesar felt aggrieved as it was on friendly terms with him. Thus, he multiplied his hostile activities. Murad II, on the other hand, plunged himself into the task of consolidating his position in Europe and in developmental works. Albania and Bosnia too joined the intriguing activities of the Christians like the Serbians and the Hungarians.

The Christians of Transylvania, a province towards the north of Serbia and Romania, took up arms in 842 A.H. but the Sultan put down the rebellion with such a heavy hand that 70 thousand Christians were killed on the battlefield and his name became a terror for them.

During those days a man named John Honey Deys or John Hani Das, the illegitimate son of King Sajmund of Hungary came back to Hungary after gaining rich experience in some of the battles fought in Western Europe. His mother was Elizabeth Marsi, a beautiful but loose woman. She secured for him the post of a Commander and he rose against the Turks. He succeeded in forcing out the Turks from Transylvania. The Turkish General Mazid Beg, who was the Governor

and the administrator was killed along with his son and 30 thousand Turkish troops also died. Now, after a long exchange of letters the Sultan agreed to a peace agreement, as a result of which he recognized the freedom of Serbia and George Bernick as its king. He also handed over Walachia to Hungary and repatriated Muhammad Chalpi in return for sixty thousand Ducats. The peace document was written both in Turkish and Hungarian. Both the kings then put their seal on it and vowed to obey it like a religious scripture. The agreement was concluded for a period of ten years.

Now, in the wake of a ten-year peace treaty, and frustration caused by the tragic death of his son Alauddin, Sultan Murad II decided to abdicate the throne. Thus, he called his second son, Muhammad II to Adrianople and performed his coronation ceremony. Since he was a boy of tender age a council of experienced and brave ministers and commanders was constituted to advise him on crucial matters. Sultan Murad II then left for Asia Minor joined the assembly of the saints and divines and adopted a life of seclusion.

But the very thought of Sultan Murad II's abdication of the throne and the ascension of a boy of tender age excited the Christians' greed and they launched a secret plan to break the peace agreement and exterminate the Turkish race from European soil. Although the king of Hungary was reluctant to become a party to the peace breakers for he had not only signed the truce but also vowed to abide by it. However, the Bishop and his deputy Cardinal Julian prevailed by issuing a verdict that breach of agreement with the Muslims carried no sin and it was rather an act of reward. Hani Das was also not in favor of breaking the agreement of peace so soon for such an act brought disgrace to the Christian community but he was lured away from his position with the offer of Bulgaria. Thus, the Christians agreed on breaking the peace agreement within a month of its conclusion.

The Hungarian army launched an attack on the Turkish border security force. Hani Das besieged and conquered Warna. They killed all the Turkish soldiers found on the way and they made a new record in committing crimes against the Muslims.

Members of the Ottoman court, at last, went to Asia Minor and posting Sultan Murad II with the breach of agreement by the Christians and the

latest development, requested him to come out of seclusion and lead his army to punish the defaulting Christians and save the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, Murad II rushed to Adrianople and then left for *Warna* where the Christian army was encamped. Hani Das's informers let him know that Sultan Murad II had given up his life of seclusion and had arrived nearby at the head of forty thousand troops to fight the Christians.

With this news, Hani Das and the king of Hungary held emergency consultations and decided to face the Ottoman assault. Following this, they drew their battle lines and placed the *Walachian* army on the left and the Hungarian troops on the right side. In addition, a huge army was put under the command of Cardinal Julian. The King of Hungary was in charge of the main body along with his commanders and brave cavaliers. The Polish army was behind all under the command of a bishop. Hani Das was the Commander-in-Chief of the entire army.

Sultan Murad II also set his troops right and raised his standard with a copy of the peace treaty atop. The battle was fought on the battleground of *Warna*. Hani Das made such a powerful attack from the right side that the Turkish troops were uprooted, the *Walachian* army too pushed back the Ottoman force. Sultan Murad II was watching the repulses from behind and was almost sure of a setback. In the meantime, the King of Hungary made a forceful charge at the Ottoman troops and reached where Murad II was standing in a state of anxiety and threw a challenge with utmost arrogance. The Sultan, without loss of a moment, shot an arrow and his horse fell down wounded. *Khawaja Khairi*, and old commander of the *Janissaries*, pounced on the King and cut his head off. He then placed the head on the point of his spear and lifted it high. The very sight of the head sent terror into the hearts of the Christian troops. However, Hani Das made a few desperate attempts to get back the head of the Hungarian King but the Ottoman army encouraged by the new developments, repelled one and all and, at last, they were beaten and driven back. Cardinal Julian, the worst enemy of the Muslims, the deputy of the Pope and the Commander-in-Chief of the Christian crusaders, was also killed. The Bishop and all other Christian commanders lost their lives. Hani Das was the only commander who escaped death.

In the wake of this marvelous victory, Serbia was annexed and Bosnia too became an integral part of the Ottoman Empire. The heinous act of the breach of trust on the part of the Christians boomeranged and a large number of Christian embraced Islam. Sultan Murad II expanded his territories deeply into Europe and consolidated and regularized the administration and went back again to a life of piety and seclusion by handing over the throne to his son, Muhammad II.

Shortly after the ascension of Muhammad II, for a second time, the Janissaries launched a demand for a substantial increase in salaries and stipends. When their undue demand was turned down, they took up arms and took to plundering. Thus, the Ottoman Empire was once again pushed into deep waters.

In view of the precarious situation prevailing throughout, the notables appeared before the Sultan once again and requested him to intervene. Murad II had to come out from his seclusion for the second time. He came to Adrianople in 849 A.H. On reaching the capital, he was warmly greeted by his army and subjects. On coming to the throne, Murad II sent his son, Muhammad II to Asia Minor to gain more experience regarding statecraft and warfare. After assuming charge of the administration this time he gave severe punishments to the opponents and the insurgents, with the result perfect peace returned to the country. The Sultan thought it improper to quit the throne for the third time nor did he want to give the Christians any opportunity to rise against the Ottoman rule. However, he never put anyone to trouble without any rhyme and reason. Even though the Caesar of Constantinople was the sworn enemy of the Ottomans and it was very necessary to uproot him, Murad II made it a point to ignore his mischief.

In 852 A.H., Hani Das made a bid to launch a fresh campaign against the Ottomans and he succeed in collecting Christian soldiers in about the same number as they had done in the past, but Sultan Murad II gave him a smashing defeat and annexed a number of Christian territories.

Following this, the Sultan had to spend much time in putting down disturbances in Albania, but he had not put an end to them when he was overtaken by death in 855 A.H.

Although the Turks conquered Albania since a long time ago, it had been left to the same ruling dynasty as a feudatory. In order to establish close contacts with Sultan Murad II the king of Albania sent his four young sons to the Sultan to be kept as hostage and to be brought up in the Janissaries. However, accidentally, three of them fell ill in the training center of Adrianople and passed away. The king of Albania smelled a rat in their sudden demise. He, therefore, wrote to the Sultan that he thought some of his enemies must have poisoned his sons to death. Sultan Murad II too felt unhappy over the incident. Now he made some special arrangement for the eldest son, Chastrait, and kept him in his palace. He was educated and trained like a Muslim prince. When he was eighteen, he was given command of a military squad and he came to be known as Sikander Beg and Lord Sikander. His father, John Chastrait died in Albania in 836 A.H. Sultan Murad did not think it right to send George Chastrait to Albania to succeed his father. The Ottoman Sultan loved him like his son and he was, in truth, in a better position with the Sultan than he could be as a ruler of Albania. Sultan Murad believed in his loyalty and he never thought of any challenge on his part at any stage.

But, in the wake of a reverse incurred by the Turkish army at the hands of Hani Das, Sikander Beg resolved to capture Albania by force. Suddenly one day he stormed into the camp of the superintendent of the office and made him write a letter addressed to the Junior Commissioned Officer of Albania forcibly to hand over the administration to Sikander Beg who was going as the viceroy of Sultan Murad II. He also had the letter sealed and then assassinated the superintendent and hurried straight to Albania. The Junior Commissioned officer handed over the administration of Albania to him immediately. Shortly after occupying the throne of Albania in this manner, he proclaimed that he had decided to return to Christianity and, in future, he would direct all his efforts to keep his country free from Turkish control. With this declaration, the Christians' jubilation knew no bounds but, at the same time, a large-scale massacre of the Turks became the order of the day, with the result, not a single Turk was spared in the length and breadth of Albania.

Since Sikander Beg was brought up, trained and educated in the Turkish environment he lived and behaved like a prince. He had



grown very rich in courage and ambition and lost all respect for the Turks. Thus, partly because of his courage and determination and largely because of Albania being a hilly country with very difficult rocky pathways, it was not easy for foreign troops to make entry across its borders easily. Sultan Murad's pre-occupations with the affairs of his country held him back from making a full-fledged attack on Albania and a few small-scale campaigns failed to produce any result.

Since Sultan Murad II had brought Sikander Beg up like his son and did not like his ruin or death. He entertained the hope of his return to righteousness. When Sultan Muhammad II came to the throne after the death of his father, he also made peace with Sikander Beg as he looked upon him like a brother. Despite these concessions, Sikander Beg rose against the Ottomans and Sultan Muhammad II was forced to take action and the result was the fall of Albania. Sikander Beg shifted to Venice where he died in 872 A.H. and Albania became a province of the Ottoman Empire.

Sultan Murad II passed away in 855 A.H. and was buried in Bursa. He ruled over his country for 30 years and passed an eventful life. He played a significant role in consolidating the Ottoman Empire. He was, by all standards, noble, pious and devoted to the dictates of Islam.

### **Sultan Muhammad II, the Conqueror of Constantinople**

At the time of Sultan Murad II's death his son, Muhammad II was in Asia Minor. He was then 21. Before this, Muhammad II had twice ascended the throne during the lifetime of his father when he was only 15 and again when he was 16. Murad II had a son from the daughter of the king of Serbia who was then only 8-months old. At the time when the coronation ceremony of Muhammad II was on, someone, without the knowledge of Sultan Muhammad II took the child to the bathroom and put him to death. Such a heinous crime was, perhaps, committed in the interest of Muhammad II because some parties were apprehensive of this child capturing the Ottoman Empire after growing up with the help of the Christian powers. But Muhammad II expressed his strong displeasure over this dastardly act and found the murderer and killed him avenging the blood of his half brother.



Since, during the lifetime of his father, he had ascended the throne twice at short intervals, they expected him to function as a weak ruler devoid of courage and determination. But he proved them wrong. He was not then a boy of 15 or 16 but a young man of 21 or 22. And these six years had not been passed in playing but in developing his skills as a ruler, administrator, fighter and warrior. His company of religious scholars and spiritual divines had enhanced his will power and qualities of mind and spirit.

European historians accuse him of murdering his half brother but these accusations were simply because of his being the Conqueror of Constantinople. However, it is a matter of common knowledge that a commander of the Janissaries killed the child. Moreover, they all agree that Muhammad II killed the accused in retaliation. It is simple logic that during the coronation ceremony Muhammad II must have anticipated no trouble from that small child of only eight months. Had he been apprehensive of the child he could have implemented his plan, if there was any in days to come using some clever device. Furthermore, the commander of Janissaries had not accompanied Muhammad II from Asia Minor to Adrianople, he was in Adrianople much before the arrival of the Sultan. If the Sultan had such a plan, he would have carried it out through any of the commanders accompanying him from Asia Minor who were his confidants. It was against all precautionary measures to give such an order at such a crucial moment. Besides, the accused did not divulge his secret even at the point of death. Mohammad's relation with his stepmother, the princess of Serbia was so pleasant that she had joined the coronation ceremony on her own. Furthermore, the future life of Muhammad II had no similar instances of such a stupid and cowardly act, which did not fit the profile of such a pious and courageous soul.

It is an undeniable fact that the Janissaries had endeared itself enough to the Ottomans and they so often committed undesirable acts on their own like those of a spoiled child. Sultan Muhammad II's period was not free from such instances. The accused commander of the Janissaries had done so in order to keep Sultan Muhammad II in his control by obliging him in this way. The Caesar of Constantinople was under the same delusion and it not only cost him Constantinople but his life as well.

In 852 A.H. three years before the death of Caesar John Palaeologus, Caesar Constantine XII came to the throne of Constantinople. He too was very clever and alert like his predecessor. Following the death of Sultan Murad II and the ascension of Sultan Muhammad II, he forged the opponents and detractors of the Ottomans in Asia Minor into a strong insurgent force and encouraged them to take up arms against the new Ottoman ruler, with the result Sultan Muhammad II had to go to Asia Minor to put the matter right and bring peace and order to the Ottoman territory. But, in the meantime, Caesar Constantine sent word to him that Orkhan, a prince of the Ottoman dynasty was in his custody and he should increase the amount sent from the royal treasury to be spent on the internee, otherwise he would be set free to wrest the country from him.

Since Caesar was aware of the weak disposition of Sultan Muhammad II, he attempted to extort money from him by threats. Had Sultan Muhammad II been as weak as Caesar thought him to be he must have yielded to the threat. But Sultan Muhammad II had courage and will-power more than Alexander of Greece and Napoleon of France. He, therefore, arrived at the conclusion that peace could not be maintained unless the Christian kingdom of Constantinople was eliminated. He thus sent away the Christian envoy without making any reply.

On his return from Asia Minor, Sultan Muhammad II, entered into a three-year peace treaty with Hani Das, the king of Hungary. With the conclusion of this agreement, his northern borders became safe. The next step taken was that he punished the commanders of the Janissaries and cut them down to size. After a short interval, Caesar Constantine sent his emissaries to Adrianople with the same demand and threatened to set Orkhan free. Reacting sharply to this stupid demand the Sultan ceased the maintenance allowance and turned out the emissaries. Following this Muhammad II set himself to preparing to invade Constantinople. Now Caesar's eyes opened and he acknowledged his mistake. The man thought to be a fox turned out to be a lion. But Caesar Constantine too was a distinguished fighter and he started making preparations for the ensuing battle without loss of time. The enlightenment and far-sightedness of Constantine is commendable in that he brought about unity between the two major

factions of the Christians. In those days the entire Christian world was divided in two parts one following the Pope of Rome the leader of the Roman Church and the other one, which followed the Greek Church and considered the Archbishop of Constantinople as its religious guide and Caesar of Constantinople had the pride of enjoying his patronage.

Caesar Constantine wrote to the Pope of Rome to bury the differences and rise united against the Muslims. He assured the Roman Pope of his acceptance of the Roman creeds and that the Church of Constantinople was to be led by the Roman Church.

This proclamation of Caesar of Constantinople stirred the entire Christian world and they rose united to crusade against the Muslims as they had done to conquer Bait al-Maqdis and Syria. Christians in large numbers rushed to join the military camp. Nicholas V, the Pope himself launched a strong campaign for the crusade, which produced deep, and favorable results. Huge armies from Spain and Castile joined the Christian Crusaders in Constantinople. The Pope collected a strong army, which was sent by warships under his deputy cardinal. The Army and Navy from Venice and Genoa also set off towards Constantinople. Constantine also began to fortify the city of Constantinople as a defensive measure. The city had a population of one hundred thousand. They were asked to contribute money and to make use of all their resources in safeguarding themselves.

Sultan Muhammad II ordered Arban, a blacksmith who was a new Muslim to make long-range heavy cannons. Arban was a citizen of Hungary and had joined the services of Constantine before coming to the fold of Islam. A number of such cannons were made and a few of them could fire heavy shells. Although, a few years prior, Sultan Murad II had already used cannons in battle they had not come to be considered an effective weapon yet. As for demolishing the walls of forts, those cannons made no major improvement over the catapults and it was difficult to move them swiftly from one place to another. Moreover, it could only fire seven to eight shells from morning to evening and so these cannons were not expected to be of much use during the siege of Constantinople.

First of all, Sultan Muhammad II paid heed to keep peace within his territories. Being free from this duty, he dispatched 50 thousand horsemen and twenty thousand infantry of brave and spirited soldiers to lay the siege around Constantinople.

Both sides had begun their all-out open preparations since 856 A.H. (1452 C.E.). Caesar Constantine had hoarded within the bounds of Constantinople large quantities of food grain. Furthermore, warships from European countries were carrying not only troops and war equipment but also supplies of food grain in large quantities. Besides, architects, engineers and seasoned military commanders had arrived in Constantinople to protect and fortify the city. They had tied strong iron chain on both sides of the sea and at the mouth of the port so that no warship could enter therein. However, they could loosen the chain to lower it to admit their own ships into the port. In this way, they had stopped the entry of the enemy warships. The walls of the city were very strong and fortified within a circumference of 14 miles and were virtually invincible. However, the walls were somewhat lower towards the port for they expected no attack from that side. Deep trenches were being dug around the City and outside of those walls were towers having cannons and squads of archers to provide safeguards to the trenches and fortifications. In short, all possible devices were put into service to fortify the defensive position of Constantinople.

Sultan Bayazid Yaldaram had built a fort at the narrowest place on the Asian coast of the Bosphorus Straits. When Sultan Muhammad II decided on conquering Constantinople, he built a fort in front of the first one. It was, in fact, the foremost preparation for war against Constantinople. The fort was ready in a very short time and cannons were fitted atop as was done with the former one. By this strategy, the door to Bosphorus Strait was sealed and separated from the Marmara Sea, which stopped the entry of Caesar's fleet into the Black sea. But these arrangements did no harm to Constantine since he was receiving help from the European countries through the Danube Pass. Sultan Muhammad II had three hundred small boats in all and none of them was equal in size to even the smallest ship in the Constantinian fleet consisting of fourteen ships.

## **Conquest of Constantinople**

On Rabia al-Awwal 26, 857 A.H. (April 6, 1453 C.E.) Sultan Muhammad II appeared on the scene in front of the walls of Constantinople, while the Ottoman fleet was concentrated in the Marmara Sea and laid his siege to the Golden Horn, the port of Constantinople. The Sultan set up suitable squads at chosen spots. He then ordered his diggers to dig mines and carry parapets near to the city walls and archers were deployed to target anyone raising his head from the walls of the city. Sultan Muhammad II demonstrated his wonderful skill in keeping the siege not only in tact but narrowing its circle and reaching the walls of the city rather speedily. Cannons and catapults were set up at strategic spots and shells and stones were hurled at the walls.

The besieged were also not careless as regards their defense. John Ghatyas, the Commander from Genoa and Duke Notarus, the Greek commander put up the defenses with great skill and expertise and the Cardinal, the deputy of Pope Nicholas V, also showed his mettle as a brave and seasoned commander and fighter. Caesar Constantine assumed the overall charge of the allied forces. He remained in the saddle from morning to evening and even during the night and he seldom left it. He would inspect every part and wing of his army and cavalry personally, he encouraged his troops to fight gallantly and looked into the performance of various commanders. Shortly after the siege began, the citizens and Christian troops were filled with a new spirit and zeal. Bishops and clergies were moving about their side of the battlefield sermonizing and singing praises of the crusade and for laying down lives on the battlefield.

Sultan Muhammad II had pitched his camp in front of St. Romans, the gate of the city and the besiegers were targeting this avenue increasingly.

At first, the besieged began to target the besiegers coming out of their ramparts and the trenches. When this resulted in heavy loss of life at the hands of the Ottoman troops, Constantine issued orders that nobody should attempt to go out of the fortified city. However, the besieged began to reply to the besiegers in the same coin. At last,

cracks appeared in the city-walls, but the besieged carried out repairs immediately. Sultan Muhammad II then took his troops near the trenches and made pathways by bridging these trenches and reached the city-walls. They could not gain control over the walls because the Christians started throwing blazing kerosene oil at the Muslim troops, with the result they had to retreat. Now the Sultan applied another device to achieve his purpose. He erected wooden towers as high as the city-walls with wheels to move them at will. A long ladder was fastened with each tower and all ladders were put on the walls, building bridges between the towers and the city-wall and Muslim soldiers started attempting to scale the walls. But the beleaguered made determined efforts to undo these attempts by hurling at them blazing shells of pitch and setting the wooden structures on fire. This new device also failed to produce any result.

On April 15, and the ninth day since the siege started, news came that four ships from Genoa loaded with shells, gunpowder and food grain reached the Golden Horn, the port of Constantinople tearing apart the blockade of the Turkish fleet. With this sensational news, Sultan Muhammad II rode to the seacoast and noticed that a fleet of five warships was advancing through the Marmara Sea. He ordered his navy commander to stop the approaching enemy warships. The Ottoman warships launched a heavy attack on the enemy fleet and broke the long row of the fleet so that they began to cluster together one by one and were surrounded by the Turkish ships. However, they failed to breach the high and heavy enemy ships and were not able to overpower them for their own ships were low and much smaller. After a short trial of strength, the giant enemy ships entered the Golden Horn, following which the Christians pulled up the iron chains stopping the chase of the Turkish ships.

Sultan Muhammad II witnessed the failure of his navy with his naked eyes and grew very sad. He called his navy commander, beat him thoroughly and ordered him to stay cautious and alert thereafter. In fact, the navy commander was not at fault for he could not board the giant enemy ships with his smaller ones. Nevertheless, the punishment meted out by the Sultan worked wonders and after that no enemy ship was able to pass by that route.

Sultan Muhammad II then showed the utmost steadfastness in the implementation of the siege but he had to sustain losses and reverses repeatedly which added much to the courage and determination of the Christians. There was no dearth of defensive material and food grain. Moreover, they were sure that the Hungarian king Hani Das would break the peace agreement and come to their aid and with his arrival the siege would be raised. In view of these setbacks and reverses, anybody else would have raised the siege putting off the task to some later occasion. But the Sultan's strong determination and invincible courage stood him in good stead and every failure enhanced his commitment and will.

When leaving for the campaign against Constantinople, Sultan Muhammad II had brought with him a party of religious scholars, Muslim divines and pious men. In the company of those slaves of Allah, he had taken lessons in determination and grit. During the lifetime of his father, he had spent six years continuously in Asia Minor in the divine company of Muslim saints and religious scholars and his qualities of mind and spirit had grown rich beyond all limits. Even during the present siege, he was satisfied with the consultations of these divines.

When the siege dragged on, he thought of a plan, which had never before come to his mind. On one side of the city lay the sea, the Golden Horn and was supposed to be safe from any siege. Up to now all siege activities were limited to land. The entire use of force was directed at St. Romans and all efforts were pointed to pull down the city-wall from this side. Thus, the city-dwellers were also putting up all their defensive measures on this front. Sultan Muhammad thought that a fresh assault from the seaside would divide their defensive power, with the result the city wall could be more easily broken. But in the presence of the chain across the mouth of the Golden Horn, there was no way the Turkish navy could enter the area. To the east of the Golden Horn was a ten-mile wide strip of land across which lay the Bosphorus straits and the Turkish ships could move freely therein. Sultan Muhammad II spread wooden planks from the Bosphorus to the Golden Horn on the moonlit night of 14 Jumad al-Awwal. He then had eighty ships pushed across the strip of land. Thousands of troops



kept pushing the ships ahead. The men within the city-walls could not understand what caused the shouts and noises and what was the reason for the martial songs and drum beating. At last, the Ottoman ships were brought into the Golden Horn before dawn. All of Constantine's ships were kept towards the mouth of the port to block the entry of Turkish ships. With the morning sun, the citizens of Constantinople noticed to their utmost amazement the bridge of Turkish ships right below the city-walls. The Ottoman army and navy were then engaged in setting up cannons at suitable spots to shell the weak portions of the city-wall. A look at this scene sent terror into the hearts of the Christian fighters and citizens. The Christian ships made an attempt to move in and launch an attack on the Ottoman ships but heavy cannons on both sides of the port stopped them and a few of them sank as a result of the heavy shelling. It was the first occasion that Ottoman artillery worked wonders. The sudden attack from the seaside caught them unaware and they had to divide their resources.

The same day, May 24, Constantine sent his emissaries to the Sultan with a peace offer requesting him to grant him mercy and leave him as the ruler of Constantinople in return for as much tribute as he thought proper. Sultan Muhamnad II, who was then at the helm of affairs, wrote him back that, in case of submission, he could be allotted the southern part of Greece instead of Constantinople. Sultan Muhammad II was too far-sighted to know that the existence of a Christian Constantinople in the middle of the Ottoman Empire would always remain a source of danger. Moreover, he had in mind that Constantinople could serve as the most suitable capital for the Ottomans. Moreover, the offer of a piece of land in southern Greece was the height of generosity in view of the losses sustained and the sacrifices made by the Ottomans during the long siege of Constantinople. Caesar Constantine was destined to be the last ruler of Constantinople, the old and magnificent kingdom of eastern Rome. However, Constantine did not like to avail himself of this opportunity and sought to oppose the Ottoman ruler more vehemently.

Thus, on Jumad al-Awwal 19, 857 A.H. (May 28, 1453 C.E.) Sultan Muhammad II proclaimed throughout his army that an all around attack would be launched the next day at dawn and the troops would



be left free to plunder the entire Constantinople but without doing any harm to government buildings and the old, the women and children and the subjects seeking peace.

The news of a general attack the next morning filled the Muslim troops with utmost joy and they passed the night in shouting slogans out of zeal. Caesar Constantine, on the other hand, called a meeting of his commanders, nobles and notables in his palace to inform them about the ensuing Ottoman attack the next morning he induced them to fight gallantly and to the last drop of their blood. Caesar then went to St. Aya Sofia Church to pray for his victory. From there, he went straight to his palace, which was overtaken, by despair and harassment. After taking rest for a while he mounted his horse and came to St. Romans, which was, then under heavy attack.

Sultan Muhammad II, on the other hand, following the predawn prayer, requested the assembly of religious scholars and pious people to pray to Allah Almighty for the victory of Islam.

The Sultan then took ten thousand selected horsemen under his command and set off for the campaign ahead. His spiritual guide then asked the people to erect a separate booth for him and entered it alone to pray to Allah for an Ottoman victory. He put a gatekeeper to stop the entry of anyone. The Ottoman forces launched a multi-faceted attack and their cannons and catapults made cracks and holes in the city-walls. However, all their attempts to enter the city met with failure as the besieged troops and even the Christian women and children put up stiff resistance. Heads were rolling on both sides but neither side was losing courage. By noon, the battle turned hot. At this crucial moment, the Sultan sent one of his ministers or courtiers to his spiritual guide to pray and seek special Divine help. The situation was quite discouraging for the Muslim troops and they seemed to be losing hope of victory. Sultan Muhammad II also was growing anxious that if, despite an all-out attack, the city remained unconquered it would be almost impossible to win it later for the invading Muslim troops had devoted all the courage and power at their command to defeat the enemy. At such an anxious moment, the emissary of the Sultan arrived at the booth of the spiritual guide. The doorkeeper made an attempt to stop him from intruding but the

emissary made his entry by force and he found the saint prostrate praying for a Muslim victory. On the entrance of the emissary the saint raised his head and said, "The city of Constantinople has already been conquered!" The emissary of the Sultan was greatly surprised. He hurried back and found to his amazement the Ottoman flag flying atop the ramparts of the city.

It so happened that at the very crucial moment when Sultan Muhammad II had sent his emissary to his spiritual guide to request him to make some special prayer for victory, the emissary had just left with the request when unexpectedly the city wall in front of the Sultan caved in all of a sudden and with the debris of the wall the trench filled up to pave the way leading to the city. About the same time, the Ottoman navy captured a tower and hoisted the royal flag atop. Noticing the flag flying and the frontal city-wall demolished the Turkish troops under the direct command of the Sultan launched a massive attack. Even though the Christians faced the Muslims firmly they could not overcome them in the hand-to-hand fighting that ensued. Besides this, the Muslim troops, on all sides, made a heavy charge at the Christian soldiers and there was nothing but a heap of dead Christian bodies. Sultan Muhammad II mounted on his horse and went straight to the church of St. Aya Sofia and called *adhan* therein without delay. He then offered prayer along with his comrades and thanked Allah Almighty Who had given them such a magnificent victory. Following this he sent the people in search of Constantine. Near St. Romans where the city wall had fallen, the Christians had given a good account of themselves and were killed in large numbers. Constantine's body was also lying among them. His body had only two wounds. They cut off his head and brought it to the Sultan. Thus was completed the conquest of Constantinople. The Sultan then turned to palace of Caesar but found there nothing but a state of wilderness.

The conquest of Constantinople had taken place on Jumad al-Awwal 20, 857 A.H. (May 29, 1453 C.E.). Some people view the conquest to be the result of the prayer of the divine saint. It is, therefore, generally said that Constantinople was conquered with a prayer. From that day, Sultan Muhammad II came to be known as "Sultan, the Conqueror."

During this campaign, more than 40 thousand Christians fell dead and about 60 thousand were taken as prisoners. Only a small number thereof were able to escape by land and sea. They settled in Italy and various other places. One of the grandsons of Caesar embraced Islam shortly after that and settled in Constantinople. However, the dynasty went out of existence.

Sultan, the Conqueror gave full protection to the Christian population and their wealth and properties remained safe. Christian shrines and churches except the church of Aya Sofia were left to their control. Sultan Muhammad II called the Archbishop of Constantinople and gave him good news of being left as the spiritual head of the Greek Church and his religious power would not be interfered with. Sultan, the Conqueror accepted the patronage of the Greek Church on his own. Thus, the Archbishop and other priests and clergy had powers that they had never enjoyed even under Christian rule. The Christian population had full religious freedom. Various churches received from him large pieces of property. He bought prisoners of war from his own soldiers and set them free and had them to settle in a particular locality of the city. When he saw that most of the houses had lost their dwellers and much of the charm of the city had become an event of the past he, in order to restore the lost glamour and splendor of Constantinople, brought five thousand families from Asia Minor and had them settled in Constantinople, with the result the city not only regained its past grandeur but more than what it had in the past.

### **History of the City of Constantinople**

The conquest of Constantinople is considered as one of the marvelous events in world history. European historians have ended the Middle Ages with the conquest of Constantinople. It is from here that the Age of Enlightenment begins. On this occasion, it appears befitting to give a short history of Constantinople. The place where Constantinople city is now situated was first founded in the 8 century prior to Isa (Jesus) (ﷺ) by a nomadic tribe who named it Byzantium. It witnessed quite a number of events and incidents and became with the passage of time a central city and the capital of a small State. The father of Alexander of Greece attempted to occupy the city. In the darkness of night, he led

his force to Byzantium. At the time when his troops had reached the city-walls, a bright light appeared from the North and the citizens noticed the invading army and rose to defend it. The invaders retreated in view of the readiness of the citizens and the city was saved. The local population thought it to be the work of the Goddess Diana and built a temple there in her name and chose the moon as their symbol.

A short time later, Alexander conquered the city and thus avenged the failure of his father. Following the demise of Alexander, Byzantium suffered many setbacks and reverses. When Caesar Constantine conquered the city, he was pleased with its location and laid the foundation of a new city by adding some adjoining areas to it and decided to make it his capital. Although he named it the Modern or New Rome, it gradually came to be called Constantinople after the name of Constantine.

Constantine I populated Constantinople in 327 C.E. Before this time Constantine and his ancestors were idolaters but Constantine had converted to Christianity. Three years after its being populated he presented this city to Holy Maryam (Mary) and celebrated this offering on a very large scale. Thus, since 330 C.E., Constantinople became exclusively a Christian city and when the Roman Empire was divided into two parts, Constantinople became the permanent capital of the Eastern part. Caesar Justinian I, who ruled over it from 527 C.E. to 565 C.E., added to its glamour and beauty. This city suffered invasions at different times but it remained safe from destruction. The Muslims invaded it during the early period of Umayyad dynasty and Abu Ayyub Ansari ؓ was martyred in that campaign and was buried below the city wall. Although the Christians decided several times to destroy the grave of Abu Ayyub Ansari, they could not do so for fear of Muslims' displeasure. Sultan Muhammad II, the conqueror built a mosque adjoining the grave, which came to be known as Jami Ayyub.

During the Abbasid caliphate, preparations were made more than once to conquer Constantinople but it could not be done due to one reason or another. In 600 A.H., when the Crusades were on an army from Venice conquered and annexed it to Latin rule which, followed the Roman Pope as its religious guide. This rule spanned over 60 years. In 660 A.H. the Greeks, Eastern Romans, conquered it and laid

the foundation of their Eastern Rule and they became free from the dictates of the Roman Pope.

Two centuries later, Sultan Muhammad II, the Conqueror put an end to the Christian rule and shifted his capital from Adrianople to Constantinople. It had come to the Muslim fold after eleven hundred years of Christian rule. After serving as the capital for four hundred and seventy-five years it ceased to be so when at the end of the Ottoman caliphate, Ankara became the capital of the Turkish democracy. However, it is still considered as a magnificent Muslim city.

### **The Remaining Deeds of Sultan the Conqueror**

Following the conquest of Constantinople Sultan Muhammad II devoted his time and attention to developmental work and the welfare of the people of Constantinople. However, the southern part of Greece could not escape his attention and he decided on its annexation. It was particularly because a Christian Greece could serve as the hotbed of the hostile activities for Italy and other European states. Hence, he conquered and annexed the small Greek States. The same Southern Greece had a small State founded by the descendants of Caesar Constantine after escaping from Constantinople but following the conquest of their States, they all were converted to Islam.

Finding time from the conquest of the small States, Sultan Muhammad II turned to Venice but they bought peace by accepting the superiority of the Ottoman rule. In 601 A.H. a man from the royal family of Constantinople was expelled from the country during the disturbances arising among the Crusaders. He had set up a separate small State at Trabzon along the southern coast of the Black Sea, and it remained unnoticed, with the result, it remained intact for two hundred and fifty years. Whenever a Muslim ruler turned to it, it bowed its head in obedience and saved itself but it would stop paying tribute whenever it found the Muslim rulers engaged in feuds or civil wars. Following the conquest of Constantinople, Sultan Muhammad II thought it necessary to do away with this Christian State in Asia Minor for it was, nevertheless, sympathetic to Caesar Constantine.

The Christian ruler of Trabzon was the father-in-law of Hasan Tawil, the Turkman king of Iran. Hasan Tawil had occupied the whole of

Iran and Armenia. He was considered a strong king. Hence, Iran could anytime pose a danger to the Ottoman rule in Asia Minor. The Christian rule of Trabzon was, therefore, at liberty to create difficulties for the Ottoman rule. Sultan Muhammad II was fully aware of the intriguing activities of the Christian Caesar. Thus, he decided to eliminate this potential danger. He attacked Trabzon in 860 A.H. and annexed it. In spite of being a sovereign State, Trabzon was considered to be a part of the Iranian state and this event angered the ruler of Iran but he took no immediate action whatsoever.

Being free from the campaigns of Greece and Asia Minor, Sultan, the Conqueror came back to Constantinople in 860 A.H. and he, very soon, resumed his campaigns against Serbia and Bosnia. Although these two countries had become feudatories of the Ottoman rule, they were showing signs of opposition. Thus the Sultan, in order to put an end to the disturbing situation, conquered both Serbia and Bosnia and annexed both of them and sent his governors there.

Since the period of truce with Hungary had already ended and the Hungarian ruler had started his preparations against the Ottoman rule and had sought help from the Christian powers, Sultan Muhammad II thought it proper to initiate his campaign against him. Thus in 861 A.H. (July 1456 C.E.) Ottoman forces marched to Hungary. In the wake of the fall of Constantinople, the Christian powers and all the Christian states were raging with anger against the Ottomans. They also had in mind that if Belgrade, the capital of Hungary, were to fall, all of Western Europe would be within Turkish reach. Hence, forces from all over the European continent concentrated to save Belgrade. Sultan, the Conqueror led his troops up to Belgrade conquering the cities and towns on the way and besieged it. Hani Das too was a shrewd commander. He began to defend the capital with all the expertise at his command. And after much killings and bloodshed the Ottoman army, at last, made progress into a part of the city. This was the low-lying area of the city. But the Christians, instead of losing heart, ascended to the upper part and above the Turkish troops. The Muslim squads that had enter the city fought firmly the whole day but returned to their camp when evening set in. The Christians re-occupied the area left by the Muslim soldiers and refortified it even

more strongly. This event took place on July 21. Although the Muslims scaled the city-walls more than once and plundered the city the strong defensive measures of the Christians did not allow them to conquer it. At last, Sultan Muhammad II launched a decisive attack and beheaded a number of Christian commanders and even wounded Hani Das, the king of Hungary and was near to victory when a Christian soldier struck him on his thigh and injured him so badly that he was carried away on a stretcher. The present state of the Sultan was discouraging for the Muslim troops to such an extent that their advance not only stopped they began to retreat with the result the Christian attack intensified. Even though the Christian commander, Hani Das was wounded, his casualty was unknown to most of his troops. Moreover, leadership of the Christian forces was shouldered by a number of commanders in addition to Hani Das, while Sultan Muhammad II was the only one commanding his troops. The retreat of the Muslim troops was such a boost for the Christians that the Ottomans could not find peace even at their camp and they had to take their wounded ruler to Constantinople. In short, a Muslim victory changed into defeat and Belgrade could not be conquered. The Muslim reversal was celebrated all over Europe. But there was something else in store. Twenty-one days later Hani Das succumbed to his injuries at about the same time Sultan Muhammad II, the Conqueror took a convalescent bath, marking his recovery.

It has already been mentioned that Sikander Beg was occupying Albania and his upbringing in the Ottoman palace had attracted concessions from Murad II to the extent that he never challenged his position as the ruler of Albania. But, in the aftermath of the recent Ottoman reverse in Belgrade Sikander Beg also, along with others, felt encouraged and began to show signs of insurgence. Although, at the initial stage, Muhammad II ignored his rebellious activities, when his opposition took a serious turn, Sultan the Conqueror invaded Albania. Since Sikander Beg was a shrewd ruler and loved by his subjects besides ruling a land with a difficult terrain, victory was not very easy for the Ottoman king.

However, after a long-drawn out battle, Sikander Beg sought peace in 866 A.H. and promised to remain loyal in future. Sultan Muhammad II



acceded his request and granted him peace by withdrawing from Albania. But Sikander committed a breach of faith again and had, therefore, to suffer another attack that was so massive that he could not sustain it and escaped to Venice where he was warmly greeted.

Albania came to the fold of the Ottoman Empire. But Sultan, the Conqueror was no longer a terror for the Christian world following his setback in Belgrade. Thus, Venice, which had bought peace from the Sultan in the immediate past, started raising its head once again. The Ottoman ruler lost no time in crushing its revolt and conquered long coastal areas and annexed a number of cities. The defeat was so terrible that they sought a truce on ignominious terms surrendering the city of Shkodra to Sultan, the Conqueror who spread his borders up to the Adriatic Sea.

Sultan, the Conqueror appointed his commander, Ahmad Qaiduq as his Prime Minister in 878 A.H. and engaged himself in conquering Greek islands. During this period, Shah Hasan Awzun or Hasan Tawil continued increasing his strength. He had captured and assassinated Sultan Abu Sayeed Mirza Timuri in 873 A.H. Now he had a plan to challenge the power of Sultan Muhammad II in Asia Minor and avenge his setback in Trabzon. He was behind a number of uprisings in Asia Minor and each time the Turkish troops put them down. But Sultan Muhammad II had no desire to fight with the Muslim state of Iran. He had uppermost in his mind the desire of his forefather, Bayazid Yaldaram to conquer the city of Rome. With this purpose in mind, he expanded his borders towards Italy. In the aftermath of his setback in Belgrade, he occupied the entire territory up to the borders of the Hungarian capital and consolidated his position up to this point. Setting aside the conquest of Belgrade for a later period, he first conquered the Greek islands and Venice. At that time, Asia Minor and Iran were not on his mind. However, an opportunity surfaced all of a sudden.

In 879 A.H. Sultan Muhammad II, sent his Prime Minister towards the Black Sea to Conquer Crimea, which was, for a long time, under the rule of the Khans of the Genghezid race. However, in the recent past, Genoa had annexed Yaffa (modern day Feodosiya), a port on the Black Sea on the southern coast of the Crimea. The Khan of Crimea wrote to the Sultan for help to vacate the aggression and take him



under his care. Sultan Muhammad II acceded to the request and sent Ahmad Qaiduq at the head of a huge war fleet manned by 40 thousand troops and conquered Yaffa after a siege of four days and held 40 thousand Genoese. Ahmad Qaiduq captured huge spoils of war and warships too. The Khan of Crimea offered his allegiance to the Sultan, which spanned over three hundred years. Yaffa was supposed to be another Constantinople and its conquest was even more necessary to keep Ottoman supremacy in the Eastern States and the Black Sea. Annexation of the Crimea and Yaffa by the Ottoman Empire made the Iranian ruler hot with anger. Hasan Tawil began to oppose the Sultan openly.

In 880 A.H., Sultan the conqueror sent his son, Bayazid as Commander to Asia Minor to look after the affairs there while he kept himself involved in European campaigns. He had already conquered Albania and Herzegovina and he started winning islands in the Mediterranean Sea one by one. In 882 A.H. Umar Pasha, a commander of Sultan Muhammad II reached the capital of Venice with his victorious army. However, the parliament of Venice finding Turkish troops below the city-walls, sought peace very humbly with the promise that, when needed, they would provide a fleet of one hundred ships. Thus, Umar Pasha concluded the treaty and returned from Venice.

A group of the Crusaders from Rhodes set up a sovereign state in 711 A.H. These people had been in occupation of this island along with the nearby islands and used to commit piracy on the ports of Syria and Asia Minor. Even the rulers of Venice and Genoa never challenged them. They actually appreciated their acts of robbery simply because the Muslims were the sole victims of their assaults. When the Ottoman Empire spread up to the borders of Rhodes the existence of such criminal elements became a source of constant trouble to the Muslim state. Sultan Muhammad II sent a naval expedition in 885 A.H. but it met with failure. Following this, the Sultan sent another expedition under a seasoned commander who surrounded the capital and conquered the entire island. But the moment the Ottoman soldiers were about to enter the city for plunder the commander ordered them not to touch anything. This order sent waves of disappointment and discomfort and the soldiers held themselves back from completing the

conquest. This state of affairs led to a dispute between the commander and the troops and they had to return without conquering the island.

About the time the expedition was sent to Rhodes Sultan, the Conqueror sent another expedition towards southern Italy under his Prime Minister, Ahmad Qaiduq to start conquests in Italy. Thus, Ahmad Qaiduq descended on the coast of Italy and besieged the city of Otranto, which was called the gate to victory, the conquest of this city meant the conquest of Italy and Rome. At last, Ahmad Qaiduq conquered the city in 885 A.H. (August 11, 1480 C.E.) and killed or captured twenty thousand of the besieged forces. Now the conquest of Rome was not a difficult task. All of Italy was overtaken by such a great terror that the Pope of Rome was ready to flee the city.

Being informed of the setbacks in the conquests of Otranto and Rhodes Sultan, the Conqueror plunged into the task of collecting troops and making preparations for another round. Apparently, there was no impediment whatsoever in fulfilling Bayazid Yaldaram's wish to feed his horse in the Roman Church. Sultan, the Conqueror installed his military Flag on the coast of the Bosphorus Strait signaling the immediate arrival of the Sultan with a huge army under his command.

There were then three expeditions drawing his attention. One, he wanted to punish Hasan Tawil, the King of Iran who had started giving trouble to Prince Bayazid; second, to conquer Rhodes and third, to enter Rome victoriously. In spite of massive preparations, Sultan Muhammad II kept his next target a secret. It was the practice of the Sultan that he would never disclose his next target when he would himself lead the expedition even to his commanders and Prime Minister. A certain commander once asked about his next campaign, Sultan Muhammad II had said in reply that if he knew that a single hair of his beard had come to know of his plan he would pull out the hair at once and put it into fire. However, troops from all parts of his Empire were concentrating in Constantinople. It was such a large-scale preparation that 886 A.H. set in. It was presumed that he would first punish the king of Iran and then conquer Rhodes before his expedition to Italy where his Prime Minister was awaiting his arrival rather desperately, and the Pope of Rome was ready to leave with the Sultan's entry into Italy.

But Allah Almighty had decided otherwise. With the departure from Constantinople Sultan Muhammad II developed gout and it took such a serious turn that he succumbed to it in Rabia al-Awwal, 886 A.H. (May 3, 1481 C.E.). This ended the massive campaign that he planned. The expedition returned with the dead body and buried it in Constantinople. His end came at the age of 52 or 53 after ruling for about 31 years. His death proved disastrous not only to the Ottoman dynasty but for the entire world of Islam.

The year Sultan Muhammad II, the Conqueror succeed his father in Adrianople, Sultan Bahlol Lodhi had ascended the throne in India and ruled for a few years afterwards. The same year, Safar 5, 886 A.H. Khawaja Jahan Mahmud Gawan, the Prime Minister of Sultan Muhammad Shah Bahmani was assassinated in Dakan (Southern part of India). And exactly eleven years after the death of Sultan the Conqueror, Rabia al-Awwal 897 A.H. the Muslim rule in Spain ended. Had the Sultan lived for a few years and Italy was annexed by the Ottoman Empire the Christians would have no opportunity to do away with the Muslim rule in Granada.

### **A Review of Muhammad II's Rule**

Sultan Muhammad II's rule was packed with campaigns and adventures. During his tenure, he conquered twelve states and more than two hundred cities and forts. The total number of Muslim soldiers martyred during his reign came to 8 hundred thousand although the number of his regular troops never exceeded one hundred and twenty five thousand. The Janissaries who were the Body Guards of the Sultan numbered around twelve thousand.

He promulgated such laws that did away with all the evils and disorders of military and administrative spheres and made those that benefited the Ottoman Empire most. A Sultan who spent his tenure in campaigns and expeditions could not be a first-rate lawmaker. But Muhammad II was first rate lawmaker. Moreover, his court had a team of religious scholars along with a cluster of ministers and commanders.

He set up madrasas in every city, town and village under his rule and their entire expenses were borne by the government. The syllabus for

the Madrasas was also prepared by none other than the Sultan. All the Madrasas held regular examinations and awarded degrees to the successful examinees. These degrees were supposed to be the true measurement of abilities and everybody received service positions according to his academic qualifications. The courses of study contained almost all the subjects necessary for the betterment of this world and the next one. Sultan Muhammad himself was a great scholar. He was well versed in Quranic and Hadith literature, history, biography, mathematics and physics. He, therefore, chalked out the best of courses. He could speak Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Latin, and Greek fluently and eloquently. The laws promulgated in the length and breadth of his country were based on stated principles: first of all the Glorious Qur'an should be followed in letter and spirit and then the authentic Sunnah and Hadith followed by the four *fiqahs* and only after all these three stages royal orders should be acted upon. In case, any order issued by the king was against the injunction of the Qur'an and the Hadith the religious scholars were at liberty to prove it against Shari'at so that the Sultan would then withdraw it.

He had divided the territories under his rule into provinces and districts. It is quite amazing how such a warrior and conqueror could find time to devote to academic activities. He was so conscious of his prestige and position that he would never talk pleasantly and informally even with his Prime Minister. He would sit in his court or assembly only by necessity. He loved to pass his leisure in loneliness. Nothing absurd and devoid of wisdom ever came from him. He was devoted to religious scholars and valued them highly on one hand but his hate for the "ignorant scholars" and so-called pseudo-religious people was very strong. He was very particular in offering prayer and observing fast and preferred his prayers in congregation. His love for the Qur'an was the deepest. He showed kindness and tolerance to the Christians and men confessing other religious beliefs.

He was fully aware of the fact that so-called religious scholars practiced so much orthodoxy and adopted hard lines on trifles in a manner that Islam became something "horrible." Therefore, he was very much in favor of taking advantage of permission when the Islamic laws allowed it.

Sultan Muhammad II had his eyes on all the departments of his administration. He was very steadfast in punishing the culprits and rewarding the able and efficient ones. Although he loved solitude and did everything to maintain his prestige he appeared very close to his ordinary soldiers in the battlefield and helped them with everything at his command, with the result his soldiers were ready to sacrifice their lives for him. They held him like their affectionate father.

Sultan, the Conqueror was a man of medium height with a wheat colored complexion. He most often looked sad, but appeared very ferocious when in anger. He meted out cruel punishments to those committing any kind of corruption in public life with the result there was no trace of theft and robbery within the boundaries of his country. A complete absence of uprisings and revolts, misconduct and corrupt practices is the glaring proof of his administrative acumen and bold action.

## **Civil Wars after Sultan the Conqueror**

### **The Story of Prince Jamshed**

Sultan the Conqueror left two sons, Bayazid and Jamshed. Bayazid was the Governor of Asia Minor while Jamshed was appointed as the Governor of the Crimea. At the time of the Sultan's death, Bayazid and Jamshed were 35 and 22 respectively. Bayazid was somewhat idle and mild while Jamshed was remarkably active, steadfast and enterprising. Neither of them were present in Constantinople at the time of the Sultan's death. Sultan, the Conqueror had appointed Muhammad Shah as Prime Minister before sending the Prime Minister Ahmad Qaidug to the campaign against Italy as Commander. Prime Minister Muhammad Shah had a desire to enthrone Jamshed after the demise of the Sultan. He tried to keep the Sultan's death a secret and sent word to Jamshed to hurry to Constantinople however, the news was soon known. The Janissaries took up arms and put Prime Minister Muhammad Shah to death and replaced him with Ishaq Pasha. Bayazid was then informed of the death of the Sultan with the advice to come rushing to Constantinople. In the meantime, the Janissaries

took Constantinople by storm. They began to extort money from traders and wealthy persons and captured the administration of Commander Ahmad Qaiduq who had completed his preparations to make advancements after conquering and fortifying Otranto. Ahmad Qaiduq grew uncomfortable and frustrated with the sad news of the Sultan's demise. He immediately rushed to Constantinople after deputizing a commander to look after the affairs in Otranto.

Bayazid, on the other hand, hurried to Constantinople at the head of four thousand troops and ascended the throne. The Janissaries, after demonstrating their power and strength, pressed the new ruler to make a substantial increment in their salary and holdings otherwise, he would be assassinated. Bayazid surrendered before the demand of the hostile soldiers. By accepting this demand, he set the tradition of conferring rewards to the soldiers on the eve of ascension and thus used a big portion of the public wealth. Moreover, this weakness of the new ruler provided ample proof of his being far from a strong ruler and very different from his father who was a man of courage and determination.

However, his being the elder brother of Jamshed, a man like Ishaq Pasha, as his Prime Minister and his having the total support of the Janissaries none could muster courage to challenge his position. A short time later Ahmad Qaiduq reached Constantinople from Italy. Since his rival, Prime Minister Muhammad Shah, was an opponent of Bayazid and supporter of Jamshed, Ahmad Qaiduq took the oath of allegiance with Sultan Bayazid II.

Jamshed got the news of the death of his father a little late and by that time, Bayazid II had ascended the throne in Constantinople. Jamshed began to occupy cities in Asia Minor and wrote to his brother after capturing Bursa that Sultan, the Conqueror had not appointed him (Bayazid) his crown prince, therefore he had no right to become the ruler of the entire country. It was better that the occupied territories in Asia should remain under his (Jamshed's) rule while the European territories be ruled over by him. Bayazid rejected this offer and replied that two swords cannot be put in one sheath. Sultan, the Conqueror's sister lived in Constantinople and she tried to make her nephew

Sultan Bayazid II understand that fighting between two brothers was not desirable and it was advisable that the territories of Asia Minor be given to Jamshed. However, Bayazid paid no heed to these words of wisdom. He said that the most he could do for Jamshed was that he could give him permission to live in Bait al-Maqdis with his family members and he would get an allowance from the income of state and in short, no avenue for accord was explored.

Jamshed was aware of the fact that if he did not win the throne Bayazid would not leave him alive. He was by the force of these circumstances compelled to fight for his safety. Sultan Bayazid took advantage of his commander, Ahmad Qaidug's experience and decided to fight against his brother, Jamshed. The two forces fought in 886 A.H. (June 2, 1481 C.E.). At the moment that the battle became heated, a few commanders broke away from Jamshed along with the soldiers under their command and went over to the side of Bayazid, which brought about the defeat of Jamshed.

On one side the two brothers were at war and, on the other side the Pope of Rome who was about to leave Rome changed his mind owing to the news of Sultan the Conqueror's demise and sent word to the Christian powers of Europe to take advantage of the present situation and save Italy and drive the Turks out of Otranto. This desperate call drew Christians from Spain, France and Austria and the Christian forces laid a siege around Otranto. The Muslim troops of Otranto could not get any help from Constantinople. However, the Turkish force fought gallantly. Being disappointed at the absence of any help from Constantinople they sent word to the Christians that, although, in full command of the situation they no longer wanted to shed human blood. If they wanted to take back the city in peace the Turkish force could allow them to do so on condition that they were allowed to leave with honor and safety and go back to Constantinople. The Christian authorities accepted the peace offer without loss of time and sent them a signed peace treaty granting peace and safety to each Turkish soldier. When, according to treaty, the Ottoman troops began to leave the Christians committed a breach of trust and started killing Muslim soldiers. They surrounded the Ottomans on all sides and killed almost all of them. The lanes and streets of Otranto became red with Muslim blood.



This was a great shock and setback suffered by the Ottomans shortly after the ascension of Bayazid II and their foothold in Italy was lost. The door to the conquest of Italy that was opened by the Turks was closed once again, and the cloud of despair hovering over the Roman Church was removed at once. With this development, the expected help for Spain was also held back. Ahmad Qaidug was not even able to avenge the blood of the Turkish soldiers killed by the Christians.

In the aftermath of his defeat, Jamshed found it inconvenient to stay in Asia Minor and he had little faith in his own commanders therefore, he preferred Egypt as his shelter. Egypt was at that time ruled over by the Mamluks and Abu Sayeed Qaid Bey of the Cherkesy dynasty was the ruler. Since the Abbasid caliph also had its seat in Egypt, the world of Islam looked upon it with reverence.

Jamshed, after his setback, left for Egypt along with his mother and wife. He was still within the confines of the Ottoman territories when a Turkish commander raided the caravan and looted whatever goods and chattels Jamshed had with him. He then crossed the borders of the Ottoman Empire hurriedly. The Turkish commander appeared before Bayazid in Constantinople to please the ruler by presenting to him his plunder. But Bayazid had him killed for plundering a defeated and afflicted caravan. When the Egyptian ruler heard of Jamshed's arrival, he welcomed him with honor, kept him as his guest and showed him grace and sympathy. Jamshed enjoined his stay with Abu Sayeed Bey for four months. He then left to perform Hajj. He came back to Egypt after performing Hajj to the House of Allah. In the meantime, exchanges of letters between Bayazid and Abu Sayeed had begun but the Egyptian ruler would not be persuaded to go against Jamshed instead he showed more respect and sympathy.

On his return from Makkah and Madinah, Jamshed plunged into making preparations and the Egyptian ruler extended all military and monetary help to him. Leaving his mother and wife behind in Egypt, Jamshed marched ahead to fight against Bayazid. Passing through Palestine and Syria he arrived at the southwestern part of Asia Minor. With this news, Bayazid moved ahead along with his seasoned

commander Ahmad Qaiduq. Jamshed was defeated again after a fierce fight. This battle broke out in 887 A.H. (1482 C.E.) The second defeat was also led by his treacherous Turkish commander who first called him from Egypt to fight against Bayazid but changed sides when the battle took a serious turn, with the result that the rest of the troops lost their spirit and suffered a disaster.

Jamshed felt so frustrated and ashamed that he did not want to go back to Egypt and show his face to his mother, wife and the Egyptian ruler. Thus, he decided to leave for the Christian territories in Europe for rest and recuperation. Although he had opportunity in ample measure in Egypt, he chose Rhodes for the purpose and addressed the ruling group of Rhodes to allow him to stay for a short period. They responded that they considered him as the ruler of the Ottoman Empire and were ready to greet him to add to their own grace and honor. They also assured him all help for carrying out his campaign. With this encouraging but intriguing reply, he could not hold himself back and hurried to Rhodes along with 30 men who were with him. He found a large number of people on the coast to receive and greet him. From there, he was escorted to the capital with pomp and show. Dobson, the President of the Parliament gave him a standing ovation and made him stay as an honored guest. But very soon, Jamshed came to know that he was, in fact, held as a captive. Dobson then made Jamshed sign a bond declaring that, in case, he became the ruler of the Ottoman Empire he would give all kinds of concessions to the officials of Rhodes. Afterwards, he wrote to Bayazid that Jamshed was under arrest. Now if he wanted to keep peace they should be favored with freedom to make ingress and egress in all Ottoman ports and carry out normal trading activities. Furthermore, they should be granted exemption from all kinds of duties besides an annual grant of forty-five thousand Ottoman ducats to keep Jamshed confined otherwise they would set him free to stake his claim to the Ottoman throne. Bayazid accepted all the demands immediately and sent them more than forty-five thousand ducats annually. Dobson, on the other hand, wrote to Jamshed's afflicted and exiled mother to send them one hundred and fifty thousand annually as the price for not handing over Jamshed to Bayazid and keeping him in peace and safety, otherwise

they would be compelled to settle the matter with Bayazid who was offering much more than what they were demanding from her. Jamshed's mother managed somehow to meet the cruel demand of the Christians and sent word that she would keep doing so annually without interruption.

Thus, the ruling party of Rhodes made Jamshed a permanent source of income. In view of the possibility of an invasion by Bayazid to take possession of Jamshed and depriving them of their newly acquired asset, they shifted Jamshed to a city in France, and continued shifting him from one city to another. They also kept Jamshed's companions separate from him until he was alone. When he was in a certain French city, Philipina Helena, the daughter of the administrator of the city fell in love with him, with the result he was put in a house build especially for him. Jamshed became a ward of the King of France as he had become a valuable property, which everybody wanted to keep. The King of France, the Roman Pope and other influential Christians of France wrote letters to Dobson to give Jamshed to them. However, Dobson was unwilling to do so. He neither agreed nor disagreed openly. Instead, he kept buying time under one pretext or another. Prince Jamshed remained in France until 895 A.H. During this period the ruling party of Rhodes continued receiving money from Bayazid II. Being apprehensive of losing Jamshed to the King of France, they wrote him to send Jamshed back. In addition, they wrote to the mother of Jamshed in Egypt to send them one hundred and fifty thousand ducats as a traveling allowance for Jamshed so that he could be brought back from France and then to be sent back to Egypt. That helpless lady met their demand immediately.

Although unwilling, the French King, Charles VIII allowed Jamshed's departure to Italy on condition that the Pope deposit with him as security the amount of ten thousand ducats which would be forfeited in case Jamshed was taken out of Italy without the permission of the French court. The Pope, on the other hand, wrote to the rulers of Rhodes that the benefit they were getting out of Jamshed if held back because of Jamshed's departure to Italy the Pope would cover their loss.

In short, Prince Jamshed entered the Roman city and was warmly greeted and was made to stay in the royal palace of the Pope. The French envoy accompanied the Prince.

When the French envoy and Jamshed went to meet the Pope the bishops and the commanders asked Jamshed to bow before the Pope as the French envoy and others were doing. But the son of Sultan, the Conqueror refused flatly to do so and moved forward rather carelessly and with an air of a conqueror, seated himself beside the Pope and began to converse with him in a royal fashion. During the exchange, he expressed his desire to say something in private. The Pope acceded to his request. During the private talk, Jamshed complained to the Pope about the breach of trust and disrespectful behavior of the Christian commanders. He also told his story of his long suffering and separation from his mother and wife in such pathetic words that his eyes were filled with tears. The Pope too heard it with tearful eyes. However, he told Jamshed that his departure to Egypt would prove fruitless and he would not be able to restore his father's throne. The Pope also told him to go to Hungary as the Hungarian king had invited him. But, last of all, the Pope told him rather emphatically to abandon Islam and convert to Christianity and this was for him the easiest course to get back the Ottoman throne for, in that case he would be entitled to the support of the entire Christian world. The Pope had spoken this much when Jamshed stopped him and said: "I am not ready to desert Islam in return for sovereignty over the entire world." Having heard this the Pope changed his way of speech and sent him out after giving him a common gesture only. Thus, he began to pass his days in confinement as he had been doing in France.

Having come to know of Jamshed's arrival in Rome the king of Egypt sent his envoy to welcome him and the Egyptian ruler anticipated that he (Jamshed) would be sent to Egypt. Sultan Bayazid II also sent his emissary to Italy with presents and offerings to Pope to settle the matter for it was a well known fact that the Pope had the power to send Jamshed anywhere he willed, and he was not bound by the desire of the people of Rhodes.

The envoy of the Egyptian king searched for Jamshed in Rome and when he got access to him, he greeted and welcomed him in a manner he did with the king of Constantinople. The envoy related to Jamshed the story about the amount of money Dobson had demanded from his mother in the name of travel expenses. Hearing this Jamshed approached the Pope along with the envoy and reported this case of extortion. The Pope put an end to the dispute by ordering the emissary of Dobson to pay Jamshed an amount although it was very little.

The Egyptian envoy returned empty-handed. Bayazid's emissary then contacted the Pope and struck a deal for the amount Bayazid would pay to Dobson. Being satisfied with the settlement, he too returned. Following this, the Pope made suitable arrangements for Jamshed and he began to pass his days as a captive.

Three years later, the Pope passed away and was replaced by another one. The new Pope was even more mischievous than the previous one. Shortly after assuming the office, he sent his emissary to Bayazid with the message that, in addition to the annual amount of forty thousand ducats, if three hundred thousand ducats as a lump sum were sent he would get him rid of Jamshed forever. George, the emissary of the Pope expressed himself so wisely and nicely in the royal court of Constantinople, that Bayazid suggested his name for the post of the deputy of the Pope. The emissary was staying in Constantinople when Charles VIII of France invaded Italy in 901 A.H. The reason behind this attack was to take Jamshed out of the possession of the new Pope. In the aftermath of this assault, Pope Iskander fled Rome and took shelter in the fort of St. Angelo and took Jamshed with him because Jamshed was a valuable part of the royal treasury. Eleven days after this an assembly was convened to work out terms and conditions for peace between the Pope and the King of France. The first condition that Charles advanced was that Jamshed should be put in his custody. At last, the Pope, Charles and Jamshed sat together in a separate room where the Pope said addressing Jamshed, "Well Prince! With whom do you want to live the king of France or myself?" Jamshed replied, "I am no longer a Prince but a captive, so you can keep me anywhere." Finally, Charles, the king of France took Jamshed to Naples and put

him under the care of a commander with a team of military guards. Now all hopes of the Pope to extort money in the name of Jamshed were lost. Since the envoy of Sultan Bayazid had finalized a deal with the people to do away with Jamshed in return for 3 hundred thousand ducats, the Pope, having greed for money, wrote to Bayazid that he would bring his life to an end even in Naples and would be entitled to the amount as already settled. Following this, the Pope chose a Greek barber to carry out his plan. The barber had already converted to Islam and was named Mustafa. He, thereafter, turned apostate, came to Italy and had access to the Pope by means of his profession. The Pope sent him to Naples with a small packet to have Jamshed take it. It was the type of poison that would first cause the victim to fall sick and then die after a protracted illness; the poison also had no antidote.

Mustafa reached Naples and after some time got access to Prince Jamshed. Even the guards thought it unnecessary to prevent such an important person from meeting Jamshed. One day, he found an opportunity to have Jamshed take the poison, after which the Prince caught an incurable disease. In the meantime, he was given a letter from his mother but he was reduced to such a state of weakness that he could not even go through it. In such a terrible plight Jamshed invoked, "O Allah". If these Unbelievers seek to inflict harm on Muslims through me, it is better You give me death today and save the Muslims from their mischief". Mustafa had not only given him poison but also shaved his head with a razor dipped in poison. The day he invoked Allah for his death his soul left his body. This happened in 901 A.H. Jamshed succumbed to his long suffering in prison. His dead body was sent to Sultan Bayazid as was demanded by him and was buried in Bursa. Bayazid paid the fixed amount to the Pope who kept Mustafa with him and later gave him a high post.

The detailed account of the sufferings of Jamshed and the treatment meted out to him show beyond doubt the ignoble and treacherous nature of the Christians and their greed for wealth and power and their breach of trust and promise. The highest and greatest among them went down so low that they, on one hand, minted money at the expense of Jamshed and stopped the Muslim invasion of their soil on the other.

## **Sultan Bayazid II**

Bayazid II came to the throne in 886 A.H. and ruled over the Ottoman Empire until 918 A.H. He had a term of 32 years. Shortly after his accession, he had to face his brother Jamshed twice and both time he was victorious. However, his successes produced no fruit. He could not invade Italy and Rhodes because Jamshed had been under their control. His relation with the Mamluk Dynasty of Egypt became strained. Since Jamshed had taken refuge in Egypt and his mother and wife remained there until the end they started raiding the south-western parts of Asia Minor and occupied some border areas by beating Bayazid's forces in 890 A.H. Following a series of setbacks Bayazid made peace with the Mamluks at the cost of the cities and forts conquered by them.

Sultan Bayazid had a very bold and seasoned commander in the person of Ahmad Qaiduq. Bayazid could utilize his experience and talent for some great achievements. Ahmad Qaiduq was very popular with his forces and exhorted Bayazid to correct his ways. He was bold and outspoken and cared the least for royal majesty and kingly awe. However, Bayazid did not tolerate him for long.

In 895 A.H., he decided to contain the expanding power and influence of the Janissaries and was about to issue orders in this connection. Disagreeing with this decision, Ahmad Qaiduq warned Bayazid while in the court against such an injurious step and the prevailing tumult it would cause and the utility of the Janissaries in curbing the current state of chaos and confusion. He very emphatically said that a frustrated army could not be of much use against the insurgents and the very integrity of the country would be at stake. Although Bayazid kept silent in the court, he grew displeased at Ahmad Qaiduq's interference. Following this he decided to do away with Ahmad Qaiduq, who was later arrested. Being informed of the state of affairs, the forces under the command of Ahmad Qaiduq rose against Bayazid and besieged the royal palace. They threatened to kill Bayazid in retaliation in case their commander was killed. Thus, the Ottoman ruler changed his mind and handed over Ahmad Qaiduq to his 'devoted' forces and



apparently showed respect to him. However, sometime later, Bayazid sent all the entire 'devoted' force to fight in some far off campaigns and put Ahmad Qaiduq to death. The assassination of the commander proved harmful to the Ottoman Empire.

In 896 A.H., the Ottoman and Russian Empires got in touch with each other. To start with, the Czar of Moscow sent his envoy to Sultan Bayazid in Constantinople with presents but the envoy was given no special treatment and he returned after a couple of days. The naval power of the Ottoman Empire made much progress during his reign. The Sultan was very particular about his naval power because of Jamshed's invasion with the support of Rhodes, Italy and France. Thus, on one side, he made peace with the Christian powers but he kept adding to his military strength and especially to his naval power on the other.

At a time when Jamshed was being shuffled from one place to another by the Christians, the Muslims of Spain, the King of Granada, sought naval reinforcements from Sultan Bayazid. Even though he could have extended significant help, he held himself back because of fear of the Christian support for Jamshed against him. He, however, sent to Spain a very small and ordinary fleet consisting of only a few warships under the command of Kamal, his naval commander. The fleet reached the Spanish coast and inflicted only a minor loss to the Christians and did not play a major role. But with the end of Jamshed, he attempted to occupy the islands and coastal areas lying between Greece and Italy and ruled over by Venice. In this way, he started a clash with the naval force of Venice. At last, the Turkish fleet decisively defeated the Venetian navy in 905 A.H. In 906 A.H. the Ottoman war fleet had to face the allied naval forces of Venice, the Roman Pope, Spain and France as a preemptive precaution against the quickly developing naval forces of the Ottomans. They had unanimously decided to do away with the Ottoman navy. However, the Ottoman naval commander, Kamal did a wonderful job by defeating the Christian war fleet. A large number of enemy warships were either sunk or captured and the rest escaped the deadly Turkish assault. Following this naval victory Kamal's fame spread everywhere and the Ottoman navy became the terror of the Mediterranean Sea. Only a few



years before the Turkish naval victory, Muslim rule in Spain had gone out of existence in 897 A.H. Although Poland and Hungary also came to a clash with Bayazid II, their feeble attempts are not worth mentioning. However, in the aftermath of these encounters, the Polish made peace with the Sultan and the result was the Turkish occupation of some cities of Poland. Since Bayazid II was mentally inclined to peace Ottoman rule did not go beyond a certain limit in regard to grandeur and territorial expansion. During Sultan Muhammad II's period, the Christians had been so awe-struck that they were satisfied with a peace treaty with him and did not dare rise against him. We cannot, however, decry Sultan Bayazid II because during his rule, the Ottoman naval power made much progress and a number of islands and coastal areas came under Muslim control. However, he did not perform on a level worthy of his ancestors. He is generally known as a man of peace and virtue with a tinge of idleness and stupidity.

The year Sultan Bayazid II came to the throne Sheikh Abdur Rahman Jami dedicated his book entitled *Silsilatuz 'Zahb* to him. The Sheikh had also passed away on Muharram 10, 898 A.H. during Bayazid's tenure and was laid to rest in Herat. Columbus discovered America the same year, although, Spanish Muslims discovered it long before, notwithstanding Columbus is known for this accomplishment. During Bayazid's period the Portuguese king, Manuel sent Vasco de Gama with three ships under his command to discover India. He reached the port of Cannanore on the Malabar Coast and on Ramadan 20, 903 A.H. he lowered his anchor in Calcutta. During the same period, 906 A.H., Ismail Safwi, the founder of Safwi dynasty acceded to the throne of Iran. Sikander Lodhi was the contemporary of Sultan Bayazid II in India, but he died in 915 A.H., three years before the demise of the Ottoman king. On Shaban 29, 916 A.H. the Turkman king of the Shebani Dynasty was killed facing Ismail Safwi, the king of Iran, and one month later, Sultan Mahmud Beker the king of Gujarat died in Ahmedabad. The thirty-two year reign of Bayazid II was not so eventful, events occurring in other countries contemporary to his period have been mentioned here for the sake of giving the reader a historical perspective.

One more event of Sultan Bayazid II's period is also worth mentioning for it brings to focus the cold hearted and unmanly character of the Christians of that time. As already mentioned, Sultan Bayazid II had come into armed conflict with Hungary. During one such encounter, Ghazi Mustafa, a commander of Bayazid, and Ghazi's full brother were caught by the Hungarian troops. The Hungarian commander meted out such a ghastly treatment to them that the brother of Ghazi Mustafa was put on a spit and roasted over a fire like roasted meat while he was still alive. The height of the cruelty was that Ghazi Mustafa was forced to turn the spit to cook him. Following this gruesome punishment the king broke all of Ghazi Mustafa's teeth and freed him after torturing him and taking a ransom for his release. A few years later, when the same Hungarian commander was caught and produced before Ghazi Mustafa, he was simply killed without any torture or ill treatment. This single event proves beyond doubt the brute nature of the Christians in contrast to the righteous and civilized behavior of the Turks and their religious sensitivity and practice.

Towards the end of Sultan Bayazid II's reign, some internal troubles and disorders appeared. The issue of his successor was one such development. Bayazid II had eight sons. Five of them died young while the three remaining sons were named Ahmad, Qarqud and Salim. Among them Qarqud was the eldest and Salim was the youngest. The Sultan was fondest of the middle one and wanted to proclaim him as his successor. Ahmad, Qarqud and their sons were Governors in Asia Minor while Trabzon was ruled over by Salim. Salim was more valiant, adventurous and good-natured and because of these qualities, his commanders and soldiers preferred him to the others. After coming to power in Iran Ismail Safwi had spread the Shiites all over Asia Minor to teach the Ottomans Shi'a faith and make them supporters and sympathizers of the Iranian king. These efforts bore fruit and those ambitious among them rose to indulge in piracy and plunder within the confines of Asia Minor. Qarqud and Ahmad, ruling over the greater part of Asia Minor, sent their force to put down the insurgence and a number of encounters took place. However, owing to the negligence of the Ottoman Sultan and the idleness and

wrong actions of the princes, bands of insurgents gathered under the leadership of a man named Shah Quli and they developed into a strong force. Shah Quli was a staunch supporter and well wisher of the King of Iran, Ismail Safwi. He left no stone unturned in pushing the Ottoman Empire into trouble. When the news of disturbances in Asia Minor reached Constantinople, Sultan Bayazid was under compulsion to send an army commanded by his Prime Minister to face the situation. During a fierce fight at Srimashk, both Shah Quli and the Ottoman Prime Minister were killed. The event took place in 917 A.H. These disturbances and disorders occurred in the territories under Qarqud and Ahmad's rule.

Trabzon, the territory ruled over by Salim was not given any chance to rise against the Ottoman power, which was undeniable proof of Salim's steadfastness and farsightedness. He had built a huge army to keep peace and order in his territory. When he found himself at the helm of affairs, he led his force against Serkeshia and won victories. Hearing this Bayazid II wrote to him from Constantinople not to expand his territories by invading foreign lands. Salim wrote back requesting his father to install him in a European province so that he could wage *jihad* on the Christians, because sitting idle and keeping silent was against his nature and he could not remain away from the battlefield. These events occurred at a time when Bayazid II was about to declare Ahmed his successor. When the 'devoted' forces and other commanders had an opportunity with Bayazid II, they expressed their resentment. Some of them spoke in favor of Qarqud for he was the elder son, while others favored Salim for his bravery and farsightedness. When Ahmad and Qarqud came to know of this conflict, they grew anxious about losing the throne. Because of this, all the three brothers started making efforts of their own to grab power by increasing their military strength and indulging in opposing one another. As per the wishes of the courtiers and Salim himself, he (Salim) was nominated for a European province called Samundra. In a situation when efforts were on to overtake one another, Salim also strengthened his position by occupying Adrianople in Europe. With the conquest of Adrianople, Bayazid himself rushed to punish Salim and the latter had to concede defeat easily for a large section of his

army deserted him and went over to Bayazid's side. He fled the battlefield, took a ship and reached the Crimea to join his father-in-law and plunged into collecting fighters from among the Turks and the Tartars.

Ahmad, in Asia Minor, completed his preparations to conquer Constantinople and dethrone Bayazid. When Sultan Bayazid returned to Constantinople after driving away his son, Salim from Adrianople, he heard of the ensuing attack of Ahmad. In view of this situation, Sultan Bayazid became embarrassed and his courtiers started doubting his abilities as a ruler. Now, following the advice of his courtiers or on his own, Bayazid sent word to Salim to come to Constantinople along with his army and join the royal forces to put a check on the impending onslaught of Ahmad. This message filled Salim with joy and he took with him three or four thousand soldiers and arrived in Adrianople passing through difficult routes and passes and along the coast of Black Sea and from there he went to Constantinople. Hearing of Salim's arrival in this manner Bayazid sent him orders to go back to the province of Samundra, which he had been nominated for, as his help was no longer needed. But the courtiers and military commanders, on the other hand, sent word not to return but to come straight to Constantinople for he would never have such an opportunity again. Thus, Salim reached Constantinople and was accorded a warm welcome by the courtiers and military commanders. Salim then reached the gate of the royal palace and sent his message to Bayazid II to grant him an audience in the court. Thus, Bayazid convened an open court. The courtiers, religious scholars and jurists, advocates of the people and commanders expressed themselves with one accord that since the Sultan had grown old and weak it was desirable that he should abdicate his throne in favor of his son, Salim. Bayazid heard them patiently and declared Salim his successor without loss of time and quit the throne. Salim moved ahead and kissed the shoulder of the Sultan. Following this, the Sultan gave him some wise counsel and then got in the palanquin and moved on. Salim too walked along catching the foot of the palanquin. Bayazid II left Constantinople to settle in the city of Demotika and pass the rest of his life in peace and prayer. Salim escorted his departing father on

foot up to the gate of the city. He then came back and ascended the throne. Bayazid passed away on the way before reaching Demotika city. He left behind three sons and nine grandsons among the grandsons was also Sulaiman, the only son of Salim. Bayazid II abdicated the throne on April 25, 1512 C.E. (910 A.H.) and died on April 29, 1512 C.E. Sultan Salim son of Bayazid II, ascended the throne in Constantinople.

### **The Ottoman Sultan Salim**

When Sultan Salim came to the throne of Constantinople with the common consent and desire of the people and the military both of his brothers ruling in Asia Minor, could not muster courage to challenge his position. They apparently, showed their allegiance to Sultan Salim, but secretly, they engaged themselves in preparing against the central government. Salim was also not so gullible as to believe in the so-called sincerity of his brothers. But he initiated no military campaign against them. Now it came to such pass that Ahmad concentrated his forces in Amasya and filled his treasury with a large amount of money collected through heavy taxation. His son Alaaddin, on the other hand, declared his sovereignty at the insistence of his father. Having heard of these insurgent activities Sultan Salim thought it necessary to personally march to Asia Minor to put down the uprisings. Thus, he himself led his army into Asia Minor. Moreover, he sent some warships along the seacoast. He caught and killed both Alaaddin and his brother and occupied Bursa. He also found his nephews among the opponents and killed them as well. Having heard this Ahmad came out at the head of an army but fled the battlefield after being beaten. Following his defeat, he sent his two sons to Ismail Safwi, the king of Iran to live in safety, and he himself kept striving for success. In view of the sad plight of Ahmad and his son his elder brother, Qarqud ruling in the northeastern parts of Asia Minor became alert. The next step of Sultan Salim was his sudden attack on the territory of Qarqud with ten thousand cavalry soldiers. Qarqud was arrested after a slight resistance and was put to death for his claim to the Ottoman throne. However, the assassination of his brother left him sad for sometime during which he refused to take meals.

The assassination of the Ottoman princes in this manner must have naturally touched the emotions of the people and so Ahmad was able to build a huge army and challenge Salim to fight with him. Salim's army suffered several initial reverses also. However, Salim was a man of courage and determination and did not lose heart and concede defeat. He continued his recruiting drive on one hand and consolidated and regularized his military machine on the other. The result was the defeat and arrest of Ahmad and finally his assassination. This last battle with Ahmad resulting in his final setback took place on April 24, 1513 (919 A.H.).

By habits, manners and his direct course of action Sultan Salim was, beyond doubt, more valiant than his father, and a man of courage and determination like his grandfather. He was a constant source of terror to the Christian countries. However, when they witnessed that the Sultan was paying more attention to the Muslims and his internal problems, they advanced cautiously towards implementing peace agreements and keeping their western borders free from all conflicts. Shortly after dealing with his brothers, Sultan Salim got involved with Iran and Asia Minor. Had he not shown his firmness and determination against the Iranian ruler the Ottoman Empire would have disintegrated. Ismail Safwi considered himself among the descendants of Imam J'afar Sadiq and because of this, the Iranian people were emotionally attached to him. Shia-Sunni conflicts had not yet disappeared from Syria and Asia Minor. These countries had a climate favorable to the growth of the Shia faith. Moreover, these territories had a large Shia population. Ismail Safwi's maternal grandmother was a Christian lady and the daughter of the Christian king of Trabzon and wife of Hasan Tawil. Hence, Ismail Safwi had a desire to possess Trabzon, although it was a province of the Ottoman rule for a long time. Since Ismail Safwi had rose to power through Shia bigotry he knew very well how the Shia sect had played a significant role in instigating the Mongols to ravage Baghdad. Thus, the hate and enmity of an ambitious and mighty king like Ismail Safwi towards the Ottoman rule was not a matter of surprise. From the day he came to power he never failed to create trouble for Bayazid II in Asia Minor and winning the favor and support of the

people there by propagating the Shia faith. Bayazid's government failed to put a check on those hostile activities. Moreover, his two sons ruling at that time in Asia Minor took no serious notice of these impending dangers. However, Salim, the ruler of Trabzon was fully conscious of Ismail Safwi's intriguing activities and he never allowed his secret plans to bear fruit. Ismail Safwi had already captured a few border areas during the reign of Bayazid II, and when his Ottoman Governors failed to restore those territories Bayazid paid no heed to the problem.

When Sultan Salim became involved in dealing with his brothers and nephews, Ismail Safwi was watching the developments not only with a sense of satisfaction but, he lent his active support to the insurgents through his agents in Asia Minor. That is why Ahmad was able to give Salim some initial defeats. Now Sultan Salim came to know of the nefarious design of Ismail Safwi to set Murad, the son of prince Ahmad and nephew of Salim, against him (Salim) in Asia Minor and then put him on the throne of Constantinople. He was able to do so for Murad was in those days under the care of the Iranian king. He also noticed that the cities, towns and villages of Asia Minor were stormed by Shia-Sunni conflicts, which were created by none other than Ismail Safwi himself.

After doing away with his brothers, he first of all, set up a large-scale secret service in Asia Minor and ordered his agents to prepare a comprehensive list of those who had converted to being Shiites by the teachings of Ismail Safwi and were ready to lay down their lives for their leader. When the list was completed, Salim was shocked to know that Asia Minor had seventy thousand such men who were ready to fight against the Ottoman king as soon as Ismail Safwi would launch his attack on the Ottoman territory. He, however, recovered himself and rose very cautiously to face this seemingly adverse situation. First of all, he sent troops equal in number to the traitors and rebels, and handing over the list of the disloyal persons to the commanding officers of each area, to tell every soldier under his direct command to kill one rebel at the appointed date and time. They were also enjoined not to disclose the plan beforehand. Thus, in response of the order given forth fifty thousand traitors were killed in the length and

breadth of Asia Minor in a manner that the Ottoman soldiers sustained not even a scratch. Such large-scale killing of the Shi'a sect was extremely horrible. The rest lost heart and renounced their new faith. The undoing of the conspiracy of Ismail Safwi was, in fact, a marvelous victory for Sultan Salim. Although Ismail Safwi fretted much at this unfortunate happening, he kept silent. But shortly after that, he came out with the open declaration that he was about to launch an attack on the Ottomans to restore his ancestral throne by arresting and deposing Salim, the Ottoman. Having heard this Sultan Salim called a meeting of his courtiers and military commanders and informed them of his plan to invade Iran.

This declaration was made at a time when the episodes of Iranian power had gripped the mind of everyone and Turkish troops had already tasted defeat at their hands. Moreover, Shebari Khan, the king of Turkistan had already been killed by Ismail Safwi. Thus, to the audience of courtiers and military commanders any thought of attacking Iran was an act fraught with danger. They all, therefore, kept silent three times at the call of the Sultan. However, the doorkeeper, named Abdullah broke the silence. He moved ahead, knelt down before Sultan Salim and submitted that he and his companions were ready to fight under the royal banner and die for victory. Sultan Salim grew very happy and promoted him to the post of district collector. Other commanders also followed suit.

### **Ismail Safwi**

Ismail's lineage is as follows: Ismail bin Haider bin Junaid bin Ibrahim bin Khawaja Ali bin Sadrudin bin Sheikh Safiuddin bin Jibril. Sheikh Safiuddin was the first man in the family to achieve a prominent name and was famous. He lived in Ardabil and served the people as a spiritual guide. It is after his name that the family came to be known as "Safwi." Following the demise of Sheikh Safiuddin his son, Sadrudin took up the patched garment of his father and replaced him as a spiritual guide. Sultan Bayazid Yaldaram and Timur were his contemporaries. Along with the defeat and arrest of Sultan Bayazid in 804 A.H. a large number of Turkish soldiers were also held by Timur.



When, following this victory, Timur reached Ardabil he attended the shrine of Sheikh Safiuddin. During the audience Timur said, "Can I be of any service to you?" Sheikh Sadruddin said, "Release all the prisoners held from the battle of Ankara." Timur carried it out immediately. After their release, all the Turkish prisoners became the Sheikh's disciples and began to live in attendance of the Sheikh. With the passage of time, the number of these "released" captives' progeny increased.

After the demise of Timur, his empire broke into pieces and was divided among his children. Soon after the death of Timur, the Turkmen of Kara Koyunlu tribe set up their rule in the territory lying between the Black Sea and Azerbaijan. Similarly, Kurdistan, the northern part of Iraq, had gone to Ak Koyunlu, another tribe of the Turkmen, which ruled over the territory as a feudatory with the authority of Timur during the his lifetime. Qara Yusuf, the chief of the Kara Koyunlu was at enmity with Timur and passed his days wandering in Egypt during the reign of Timur. Having heard of the death of Timur, he came back and occupied Azerbaijan rather easily. Ardabil was the center of Azerbaijan while Diyar Bakr was the capital of Kurdistan.

During the time of Sheikh Junaid, the great grandson of Sheikh Sadruddin, the number of the disciples increased so much that Shah, son of Qara Yusuf was embarrassed and asked Sheikh Junaid to leave Ardabil. In response to the order, Sheikh Junaid, along with his disciples, left for Diyar Bakr. Hasan Tawil of the Ak Koyunlu was then the ruler of Diyar Bakr (Kurdistan). When he heard of the arrival of Sheikh Junaid in this way, he grew very happy and accorded him a warm welcome.

Soon after his arrival, Hasan Tawil married his sister to Sheikh Junaid. Both Ak Koyunlu and Kara Koyunlu tribes of the Turkmen were old rivals. Since Sheikh Junaid had now entered into relations with a royal family and come out of the life of seclusion, leadership had now become part of his duties. He changed his disciples into soldiers easily as they were none but the progeny of Turkish fighters. Building an army out of those soldiers, he launched an attack on Ardabil. Since the ruler of Ardabil had driven the Sheikh out of Ardabil, this

invasion was taken as a retaliatory action. Even his disciples and supporters thought so. Since the Sheikh was an inexperienced commander he suffered a setback and escaped from the battlefield and invaded the ruler of Shirvan, a friend and ally of Jahan Shah, the ruler of Ardabil. But the Sheikh suffered another defeat and fled for his life in this state of confusion an assassin's arrow hit him and he succumbed to it.

Following the death of Sheikh Junaid his son Haider succeeded him as the spiritual guide. Haider was a prince from the side of his mother and a dervish from his father's side. He had, therefore, in him both the temporal and the mystical and he drew more disciples than his father had. After the death of Sheikh Junaid, Amir Hasan Tawil made temporary peace with Jahan Shah and annexed Khorasan after killing Abu Sayeed Timuri. Afterwards, Amir Hasan wrested Azerbaijan from Jahan Shah and became the ruler of Iran. After that Hasan Tawil, the King of Iran married his daughter to his maternal nephew Sheikh Haider. Thus, Sheikh Haider became not only the son of the king of Iran but also his son-in-law. Hasan Tawil had married the daughter of the Christian king of Trabzon. His Christian wife gave birth to a girl who was named Parsa or Shah Begum. This very girl was given to Sheikh Haider in marriage and three sons named Ali, Ibrahim and Ismail were born to her. Sheikh Haider remained silent during the lifetime of Hasan Tawil. But, following the death of Hasan Tawil and the accession of his son Yaqub, Sheikh Haider built an army out of his disciples and invited others too to join his army to attack the ruler of Shirvan, southeastern Caucasus (part of modern Azerbaijan), to avenge the blood of his father. He held himself back from any such action during the lifetime of Hasan Tawil because he had made peace with Jahan Shah following the assassination of Sheikh Junaid and had also entered into a peace treaty with the king of Shirvan who had also abetted Hasan Tawil in assassinating Abu Sayeed Mirza Timuri. Thus, the peace treaty remained intact during the lifetime of Hasan Tawil, and Sheikh Haider had to delay his action against the ruler of Shirvan. Shirvan was under the rule of an Iranian dynasty for several hundred years and they claimed to be the descendants of Bahram Chubin. When Farkh Yasar of Shirvan heard of Sheikh Haider's expedition to

avenge the blood of his father he also became ready to fight. These two forces came face to face in 893 A.H. and Sheikh Haider was killed like his father and was buried in Ardabil.

After the demise of Sheikh Haider his elder son, Ali was brought to the seat of his father as a spiritual guide. Disciples in large numbers also flocked around him. When Amir Yaqub, who had succeeded Hasan Tawil, anticipated Ali's attack on Shirvan like his father and grandfather he wanted the peace treaty conducted during the time of Hasan Tawil to continue. To avoid any trouble in the future he interned Ali and his brothers in the fort of Astakhar where they passed more than four years of their lives. When Amir Yaqub died and was succeeded by his son Ahmad Beg, Ali, along with his brothers, escaped from captivity, he reached Ardabil and set himself to the task of procuring disciples. Ahmad Beg sent down an army to punish Ali who came out to face the attacking army but was defeated and killed like his father and grandfather.

During the encounter Ali's younger brothers, Ibrahim and Ismail fled from Ardabil to Gilan in disguise. Ibrahim passed away shortly after arriving in Gilan. Ismail alone, who was still young, remained alive. Ahmad Beg did not, in view of his tender age, oppose him. Ismail's old family disciples gathered around him.

By 906 A.H., when Ismail was still 14, his disciples, who used to be under arms at all times, organized themselves in a well-disciplined strong army at a very short notice. Ismail took these troops with him and launched such a massive attack on Farkh Yasar, the ruler of Shirvan that he was not only defeated but also killed. Ahmad Beg was shocked to hear of this setback and left to punish the offenders. In an action taken in a hurry, he marched with a small army under his direct command and clashed with Ismail. The logical result of too much haste and the lack of preparation was his defeat which took a heavy toll of life including his own. Following this, another ruler belonging to the Ak Koyunlu tribe took on Ismail near Hamdan but was beaten. As a result of these continuous victories, countries like Iraq, Iran, and Azerbaijan came to the fold of Ismail.

Only four years before, a man who was passing a wretched life in Gilan had now turned to be a mighty ruler. The progeny of the Turkish soldiers never lacked in loyalty and took the descendant of their benefactor, Sadruddin of Ardabil to the throne.

How amazing it is that those who led Ismail bin Haider Safwi to power could not keep peace with the Ottoman Empire ruled over by people of the same race. Since Ismail Safwi had won victories from the very beginning, his reputation as a conqueror benefited him greatly and he became a terror to his opponents. Had Ismail Safwi not spread his net of conspiracy throughout the territories of Sultan Salim and kept peace with him, the Ottomans could have turned to Europe. Because of this, Salim had to renew his peace agreements with the Christian powers and they had a long respite of eight to ten years to increase and strengthen their military power.

### **The Battle of Chaldiran**

Having heard of the war preparations of Ismail Safwi, Sultan Salim mobilized his armed forces in Yeni city in Rabia al-Awwal 920 A.H. (April 20, 1514 C.E) and entered into Asia Minor. After a week, on April 27, Sultan Salim's intelligence officers caught a spy of Shah Ismail Safwi and produced him before Sultan Salim. But instead of punishing him, he gave him a letter addressed to Ismail Safwi. In addition, he sent an emissary to Iran. Sultan Salim wrote to him the following after praising Allah Almighty.

"I, Salim bin Sultan Bayazid bin Sultan Muhammad bin Sultan Murad, the ruler of the Ottoman Empire, the chief of the brave and the destroyer of idolaters and the enemies of true religion, tell Ismail, the ruler of Iran, that the Word of Allah Almighty is above all changes. But it contains countless secrets beyond the comprehension of man. Allah Almighty sent man to the Earth as His Khalifa (vice regent) for man alone embodies both spiritual and physical forces at one time, and man is the only animal who can understand the Attributes of Allah and worships Him for His High Qualities. Man cannot acquire true knowledge from any religion but Islam and none can gain success except by following the Last Prophet (ﷺ). O Amir

Ismail, you can never attain success and prosperity for you have defiled the pure and sacred principles of Islam by going against the dictates of the *Shari'at* and gave up the way to salvation. You demolished the places of prayer and captured power in the East by foul and unlawful means. You have attained your present position by tricks and fraud. You have opened the doors to cruelties and mercilessness on the Muslims. You are not only a liar, merciless and an apostate but also unjust, a fabricator in religion and one showing disrespect to the Qur'an. You have created differences and dissension in Islam by wrong interpretations. You have sowed the seeds of mischief and disturbance throughout and raised the banner of faithlessness. You have committed terrible excesses overpowered by your baser self, and you have permitted one and all use of abusive language against Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman. Since you have committed infidelity in word and deed, our religious scholars have issued a verdict of capital punishment on you. They have also given a verdict that every Muslim should make it his duty to do away with the evils and impurities lying within you and your followers. Now, in order to implement the decisions of the religious scholars which are totally based on the dictates of the Qur'an and for strengthening Islam, the Religion of Allah and saving people from your atrocities, I have decided to put on armor by putting off royal garments and took up my flag for the battlefield, the flag that has never seen defeat, and attack you with a sword which goes mad when it is unsheathed along with soldiers whose swords inflict deep injuries on the enemy. We have already crossed the Straits and I am sure, by the Grace of Allah, I will very soon put an end to your cruelties and disruptive activities and take out of your mind the smell of arrogance which has driven you towards evil acts. But, since I follow the dictates of *Shari'at*, I think it necessary to put the Qur'an before you and invite you to follow the true religion. The best course to shun the evil is to take stock of the record of deeds, repent for the evils done and ward off all evil acts in the future. Moreover, give back to the possession of our junior commissioned officers those territories, which you have

unlawfully taken away. Do carry out these orders if you hold your safety dear and do it immediately. But if you fail to give up the wrong acts of your ancestors you will see your fields covered with our camps and watch us showing our wonderful acts of bravery. The entire world will then see the verdict of Allah Almighty, the greatest of all judges."

As pointed out in the letter, Ismail had demolished all the tombs and mosques belonging to the *Sunni* sect and put them to untold miseries. The ancestors of Ismail were not Shi'a by faith. They all belonged to the *Sunni* sect and practiced *Sunni* faith. After the time of Sheikh Junaid when the family was engaged in warfare, they began to induce people to love of *Ahl-e-bait* (members of the Prophet's family) for they were sure of their easy success in bringing recruits in this way. But, gradually, they stuck to the Shia creed for political reasons. Ismail Safwi indulged in excessive exaggeration and began to propagate the Shiite faith all over the country. Since the Iranians were inclined to this faith, he achieved remarkable success in his attempt. But those Muslims who showed firmness in faith suffered terrible atrocities. He propagated his beliefs across the borders of the Ottoman Empire. Sultan Bayazid did not arrange to put a check on it but Sultan Salim paid immediate attention to this scourge.

Along with the letter, Sultan Salim had sent his emissary to demand the return of Prince Murad in case he (Ismail) was reconciled to the Sultan's way of thinking. Having gone through the letter he handed over the emissary to Murad who, at the instance of Ismail Safwi, cut the emissary into pieces. This step of Ismail was not only brutal but against the royal norms. Ismail sent the following reply to Sultan Salim:

"I couldn't understand the reason behind your burning anger. I think you have written the letter under the effect of opium. If you are set to fight, I am also ready to face you and leave the result to Allah. You will measure the merit only during the fight."

Along with the letter Ismail Safwi sent a small box of opium as a gift to Sultan Salim, meaning thereby that the Sultan's letter was from one addicted to opium and the letter was written under the effect thereof.

Having seen the box of opium and having gone through the letter Salim fell in wrath and retaliated by killing Ismail's emissary. He then organized his forces and marched to Tabriz, the capital of Ismail Safwi. When he took stock of his troops in Sivas, they were comprised of eighty thousand cavalymen and forty thousand infantry. He divided his forty thousand infantrymen into many parts and deployed a company at every stage from Sivas to Kayseri with the instruction that each company should move one stage ahead as the troops under the command of the Sultan moved a stage ahead of Kayseri. The arrangement was made to facilitate the movement of supplies. But as Sultan Salim stepped into Iranian territory he witnessed that, by the order of Ismail Safwi, the Iranians had destroyed all populated areas and cultivation and burnt down all the vegetation, trees and grass and had set a large army to ravage its own territory leaving nothing for the Ottoman troops. The Iranian population was ordered to vacate the area with what they could carry and set what was left on fire otherwise the army would turn them out and reduce their goods and chattels to ashes. In such a situation Sultan Salim faced difficulties although he had already made adequate arrangements for supplies from Constantinople and the European provinces to the port of Trabzon by ship and from there on donkeys and camels up to the military camps. Ismail Safwi kept moving back without putting up any resistance and ravaging his own country. He had in mind that Salim would not be able to lead such a huge army so far and would have to retreat exhausted and discouraged and Ismail Safwi was not very wrong. At one stage of the long march the tired army refused to go-ahead and the commanders advised the Sultan against further movement. The Sultan disliked the suggestion and kept moving ahead instead of going back. Now the Ottoman force entered Azerbaijan via Diyar Bakr (Kurdistan). At this stage, the commanders jointly sent Hamdan Pasha the childhood friend and classmate of the Sultan to go and persuade him to return. He called on the Sultan and entreated him not to displease his troops and go back. Having heard this Sultan Salim turned mad with anger and cut off his head. No one could even make a murmur against the Sultan. However, at one stage of this long and arduous journey the 'devout' forces, most courageous and valiant



of all, raised a unanimous voice against going ahead. In view of the behavior of the entire army, the next morning Sultan Salim came on horseback and stood among the 'devout' army and addressed the soldiers as a whole:

"I have not come here to go back unsuccessful. Those who are valiant and cannot bear the blame of timidity because of their inherent nobility and fear not the wounds of arrows and swords will certainly go with me. But those who prefer life to honor and want to go back home deterring the troubles ahead are permitted on my part to leave the company of our brave and mighty men. In case none of you accompany me and leave me alone I shall not go back without fighting."

Having said this Sultan Salim ordered the 'impotent' to leave and the brave and those having a sense of shame to march ahead without delay. The stirring words of the Sultan electrified the entire army and it set out without a single soldier staying behind. It was the blessing of his manly courage that at the next stage the Christian ruler of Caucasia sent a huge amount of supplies to the Ottoman troops. This generosity was given to win the heart and favor of the Sultan. Now Tabriz, the capital of Ismail was not far away. Sultan Salim then reached the valley of Chaldiran, and as he ascended a moun towards the west of the valley, he witnessed the Iranian force in the field facing him and he grew happy. In each letter addressed to Ismail Safwi until then Ismail had put him to shame by evading a fight with the Ottoman force. Had Ismail Safwi left his capital too, Sultan Salim would have stopped his march and not gone beyond Tabriz. But Ismail could not bear the Ottoman advances any more. Chaldiran lay a little more than twenty miles away from Tabriz and Ismail Safwi had chosen this place to give battle to Salim. Ismail Safwi's army was almost equal in size to that of Salim's but with a difference. While the Ottoman force was extremely exhausted, Ismail had a fresh army, armed to the teeth. Ismail Safwi's retreat was, in fact, a part of his war strategy and he was very sure of defeating an army that was overtaken by fatigue. In such a situation, it was reasonable for Sultan Salim to delay the clash for a day or two and allow his troops to take a rest and regain lost freshness and energy. But, since Sultan Salim was impatient to fight with Ismail Safwi, he could not hold back when he



came face to face with the enemy. As the spies of Ismail Safwi had informed him, the Ottoman force was to appear from the front he had drawn his battle line accordingly and was determined not to give any respite to the exhausted Ottoman army. He had also come to know of the artillery with Sultan Salim besides the number of troops he had. As a war strategy, he divided his eighty thousand cavalry into two parts, each consisting of forty thousands and kept one part under his direct command while another part he entrusted to his Commander, Abu Ali. He then issued instructions that in case of an Ottoman attack, the front line soldiers should face the assault and the two cavalry corps should come around from the right and the left side to reach behind and fall upon the enemy troops. When Sultan Salim noticed the firmness of the Iranian force, he placed his troops drawn from Asia Minor under his Commander Sanan Pasha and those from Europe to Hussein Pasha and put Sanan Pasha on the right wing and Hussein Pasha on the left. He took his 'devout' soldiers with him and kept to the center. He then mobilized the feudatories and volunteers as the vanguard; the artillery was set up at a suitable spot. Since Ismail Safwi knew about the artillery of Sultan Salim, he had utilized the services of eighty thousand cavalymen to neutralize its effect. This was, in fact, a commendable and wise strategy on the part of Ismail. Thus, as both the armies came closer and the confrontation started Ismail Safwi went around the Ottoman force and targeted its right wing with his forty thousand cavalymen and Abu Ali did the same from the left side. As the battle broke out, calls of *takbir* (*Allahu-Akbar*) rose from the Ottoman side while the Iranian troops cried "Shah, Shah." Thus, while the war cry of the Ottoman force meant, "Allah is Great", the Iranian army was chanting the name of its king and both the forces could be identified by their distinctive chants. However, Ismail Safwi, evading the artillery fire, launched a fierce attack on the Husain Pasha's right wing from behind and took a heavy toll on the European corps. Ismail's Commander Abu Ali also attempted to give the same performance on the left side but did not achieve much success. A part of his cavalry came within the range of the Ottoman artillery and they lost their existence along with their commander, Abu Ali Sanan Pasha put Commander Ali's troops to rout rather

easily. But Hussein Pasha was still struggling to beat the Iranians who were proving their worth as formidable fighters. Sultan Salim was watching the battlefield with the utmost caution. When he found Sanan Pasha in a dominant position and needed no help, he hurried to the rescue of Hussein Pasha with the selected squads under his direct command and launched such a massive attack that the Iranians were uprooted and Ismail Safwi himself fled the field.

Ismail Safwi was caught in his attempt to escape to safety but his comrade Mirza Sultan posed as Ismail and as the Ottoman soldiers turned their attention to Mirza Sultan, Ismail Safwi escaped. The entire battlefield was cleared of Iranian troops. When Salim captured the military camp, he found that the Iranian ruler had fled in such a state of fright and confusion that he left behind not only his treasure but also his beloved wife. Sultan Salim kept the women and children in custody and killed all the prisoners of war. The deserted look of the battlefield showed that fourteen Ottoman commanders and an equal number of their Iranian counterparts were lying dead. Sultan Salim was much aggrieved at the loss and buried them with honor. Following this Sultan Salim proceeded to Tabriz and entered the city only thirteen days after the battle of Chaldiran on August 22, 1514 C.E. (Rajab 20, 920 A.H.). Ismail Safwi had taken refuge in Tabriz but fled to Khorasan on hearing of Sultan Salim's march into the city. After a halt of eight days in Tabriz, the Sultan proceeded to Karabakh. During his stay in Tabriz, Mirza Badiuzzaman, a prince claiming to be the descendant of Timur called on the Sultan and was greeted warmly and honorably. Salim had in mind a march to Azerbaijan and to pass the spring there before leading his campaigns against the eastern countries but his force once again refused to go ahead and pressed Sultan Salim to go back home. The return of the Sultan was similar to that of Alexander who was forced by his army to return from the banks of the river Satluj. Even though Sultan Salim left from Karabakh, he did not go straight back to Constantinople. He halted at the city of Amasya in Asia Minor and after passing the spring there invaded Armenia, Georgia and the Caucasus territories and annexed them to the Ottoman rule. He had already occupied Azerbaijan. He was now planning to conquer Kurdistan and Iraq, which until then was under the rule of Ismail Safwi. In the meantime, news came from

Constantinople that the Ottoman force there was about to revolt and had shown disrespect to the Viceroy of the capital. This new development compelled him to return to the trouble spot, but he appointed seasoned commanders to complete his unfinished tasks who, in a short time, conquered Kurdistan, Iraq and up to the coastal areas of the Persian Gulf. Thus, half of Ismail Safwi's country became the part of the Ottoman rule. All future attempts of the Iranian ruler to restore his lost territories ended in defeat.

One of the gains of Sultan Salim in Tabriz was that he contracted about one thousand builders, architects and artisans and sent them to Constantinople offering them higher daily wages plus endowments. The builders and architects of Tabriz were at that time famous all over the world. Thus, he fulfilled the needs of Constantinople. On being defeated thoroughly, Ismail Safwi made a few attempts to make peace with Sultan Salim and divert his attention elsewhere but because of his strong dislike for the Iranian ruler he spurned his peace offers and refused to build any friendly relations with Ismail. Had Salim not been involved in the affairs of Syria and Egypt he would have invaded Iran once again to wrest from Ismail Safwi the remaining parts of his country. As a result of these conquests, the Ottoman Empire expanded deep into the eastern regions and a number of fertile provinces came under its control. Most importantly, the Ottoman rule was no longer under threat from its eastern borders. Ismail Safwi wrote to Sultan Salim to send back his wife who was still in the custody of the Ottoman ruler. Since he considered Ismail an apostate and faithless he refused to send his wife to him and married her to one of his soldiers, Ja'far Chalpi. When Ismail Safwi came to know that his wife was enjoying her married life with a Turkish soldier, he was downcast by this terrible shock and he lived and died in the same state.

### **Conquest of Egypt and Syria**

It has already been mentioned that Malik al-Saleh of the Ayyubi dynasty had organized a force in Egypt based on the Mamluks, which may be called a slave army. Very soon, these slaves captured the Egyptian throne. About the same time, the Slave dynasty was in

power in India too. While in India, only two kings from the Slave dynasty were actually slaves and the latter kings only belonged to that dynasty, in Egypt however, only a slave could succeed to the throne on the death of the slave ruler. Those slave kings were called Mamluks. They ruled over Egypt until the time of Sultan Salim and the Abbasid caliphs lived in Egypt only to provide a safeguard and to provide credibility to those Egyptian kings. The Mamluk rule of Egypt was also very respectable and mighty. The Mamluks extended two marvelous services to Islam. One, they saved Islam from the Christian assaults and did away with the crusades forever; two, they put a check on the surge of Mongol invasions and beat the forces of Genghis and Hulagu Khan. It is quite strange that the victorious Mongols were thrashed by the slaves (Mamluks) of Egypt were beaten again by the slave kings of India. Thus, the Mongols who took the most respectable and highest dynasties by storm were routed by the Muslim slave kingdoms.

The Mamluk dynasty of Egypt, which ruled in Egypt, Syria and the Hijaz from the end of the Ayyubi dynasty, had never been inimical to the Ottoman dynasty. However, when Prince Jamshed took refuge in Egypt after being defeated by his elder brother Sultan Bayazid II relations with Cairo and Constantinople turned bitter to the extent of causing a clash between the two and the Ottoman rule had suffered setbacks at the hands of the Mamluks. They were anxiously watching the victorious marches of Sultan Salim and especially the defeat of Ismail Safwi. They were anticipating Salim's campaigns against Egypt to restore the cities and forts occupied by the Mamluks during the rule of Bayazid II. Ismail Safwi, after being defeated by Sultan Salim, sent his emissary to the Mamluk ruler to establish friendly relations with Egypt. Qalzu Ghazi, the ruler of Egypt held the Iranian emissary in esteem and accepted the offer. The emissary also warned the Egyptian ruler against the impending danger of Salim's invasion. These new developments drew his attention to the demand of the situation and he himself came to the city of Aleppo (Arabic: Halab) and stationed himself there. Immediately after this, he mobilized an adequate number of troops along the Syrian borders. This was only done for precautionary measures. Sultan Salim had, perhaps, no intention of attacking the Mamluk rule for the Mamluks were devout Muslims and they had a

common faith. However, the unfortunate Mamluks suffered a setback because of the secret planning of the Iranian ruler, which positioned Mamluk and Ottoman forces in apparently hostile postures.

On his return from Iran, Sultan Salim sat down in Constantinople to organize and regularize the internal administration in Constantinople. He no longer had any target other than the European borders and Christian states. His ancestors had been campaigning against the European powers from the beginning of their dynasty. In 922 A.H. Sultan Salim received a message from Sanan Pasha, Governor of the eastern part of Asia Minor, that he was unable to lead his expedition into the Euphrates valley because of the presence of a Mamluk force on the Syrian border for, according to him, they could possibly attack the eastern parts of Asia Minor in his absence. Sultan Salim called an emergency meeting of the commanders, scholars and ministers in Constantinople and sought their advice on how to deal with the Mamluks. After a long discussion his superintendent of the vernacular office Muhammad Pasha made a fervid speech and said that the Ottoman Empire must demonstrate its might, and the Mamluk rulers do not deserve to serve the Sacred Sanctuaries of Makkah and Madinah and keep the Hijaz under their control. Hence, the Sultan must achieve this honor and this would be considered as a great service to Islam. Thus to fight against the Mamluks was valid and lawful. Sultan Salim liked the suggestion and appointed him as his Prime Minister.

Sultan Salim was determined to fight the Mamluks, first he sent his emissary to Qalzu Ghazi, the ruler of Egypt demanding from him obedience and tribute and threatened to invade in case of failure of implementation. When Sultan's emissary called on Qalzu in Aleppo, Qalzu was angered and imprisoned him. On receiving the news, Sultan Salim proceeded from Constantinople at the head of a force. When the Ottoman force drew near the Mamluk ruler got embarrassed and sought peace from the Ottoman ruler and released his emissary at once. But Sultan Salim paid no heed to the request and kept moving ahead. Thus the rival forces came face-to-face at Marj Wabiq, where lies the grave of Prophet Daud (sa) (the Prophet David). On August 24, 1516 C.E. (922 A.H.), two years after the battle

of Chaldiran. Although the Mamluks were not deficient in bravery and courage, they were then overtaken by internal strife and rivalries and could not withstand the onslaught of Salim's huge force. The Mamluk ruler, who was an old man, fought gallantly and died in action. With this news, the Mamluks troops lost ground and Sultan Salim seized Aleppo (Halb),

But this initial defeat failed to frustrate the Mamluks for they considered the Ottomans unequal to them in valor. However, they returned to Cairo to elect a new Sultan. The Mamluks had twenty-four commanders who had the right to unanimously elect a new ruler and they all had to be present in the capital on such an occasion. Syria was now open to Sultan Salim in the absence of the major Mamluk commanders. Salim seized the opportunity and took full advantage thereof and brought Damascus and Bait al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) under his control. The Mamluks did not put up a strong resistance on their part.

The Mamluks elected Tuman Bey as their new ruler. Immediately after accession, Tuman sent a big force to the borders of Egypt and Syria to put a check on the advance of Sultan Salim and he set about building a huge army. In the meantime, Sultan Salim, fortunately, found a big treasure in Damascus, which belonged to the Egyptian rulers. This treasure played a role in the future conquests of Sultan Salim. With this huge amount he won the hearts of religious scholars, orators, religious groups and judges and donated lavishly to building mosques, madrasas, bridges and the carrying out of welfare projects besides, providing camels of burden and other necessary materials to be used in attacking Egypt. The Egyptian force moved up to Gaza, the bordering strip of Egypt. Sultan Salim led his troops passing through populated and flourishing areas of Syria. While entering the deserts, he loaded enough water on camel back and gave away rewards to his soldiers to enhance their courage and determination. He then handed over the artillery to Pasha by appointing him as the Commander of a huge army and sent him ahead as the vanguard. He himself took the remaining troops and marched forward with great caution. This ten-day long journey passed safely. Sanan Pasha fought with an Egyptian column at Gaza under the Mamluk commander Ghazali. Even though the Mamluk soldiers fought very valiantly, the Ottoman artillery

routed them thoroughly. They lost the battle because their bravery was no match for the artillery of the Ottomans. This victory added much to the courage and determination of the Ottoman force and they shook off the fear of the Mamluks.

## **Clash between the Mamluks and the Ottomans in Egypt**

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On being thoroughly beaten in Gaza Ghazali came back to Cairo and gave the shocking news of their disaster caused by the Ottoman artillery. But the irrepressible Tuman Bey instead of losing courage he grew more determined. He mobilized his troops along the road leading to Syria and waited for the arrival of the Ottoman force. Sultan Tuman Bey was a noble man and a brave fighter. At times, the forces of destiny go against able and noble souls and so it happened with Tuman Bey. His election as the head of the country was opposed by a section of the commanders but they could not raise their voice openly at that time and kept smoldering with anger. Had Tuman Bey found time he could have pacified his opponents but his military engagement immediately after accession allowed him no opportunity for this noble work.

Two among those opposing commanders were Ghazali and Khairi. They started making secret plans to bring about the defeat of Tuman Bey in his efforts to save Egypt. They entered into secret correspondence with Sultan Salim and acquainted him with all the war preparations and military strategies of the Egyptian ruler.

In order to render Sultan Salim's artillery inoperative Tuman Bey worked out a plan that the Egyptian cavalry should attack and capture the artillery before it was set into action and then hand-to-hand fight with swords and lances would be started. But those two traitors informed Sultan Salim of this strategy with the result the new plan of the Egyptian ruler was unfulfilled. Thus, Sultan Salim was fortunate enough to get supporters from among the Mamluks themselves.

Both the forces drew their battle lines at Ridwaniah on January 22, 1517 C.E. (922 A.H.). Since Salim was already alert, he gave Tuman Bey no chance to implement his plans and the Mamluk force had to



fight in front of the artillery. As the battle broke out, the two treacherous commanders joined the military camp of the Ottomans. However, the Mamluk troops fought with exemplary valor. At one stage, Tuman Bey took a squad of his cavalry armed to the teeth and launched a fierce attack on the main Ottoman force. Two brave Mamluk commanders who had vowed to either catch Sultan Salim alive or kill him on the spot supported Sultan Tuman Bey.

This attack of a small band of Mamluks was like an earth tremor, which shook the entire Ottoman army. Nothing could stop them from making inroads into the enemy's heart. Rending the enemy lines and killing them in large number, they reached the spot from where Salim was watching and directing his troops. But, taking Sanan Pasha as Salim, Tuman Bey targeted him so accurately with his spear that he fell down dead on the spot. Similarly, the Mamluk commanders, Alan and Qarat, killed two Ottoman Commanders mistaking them for Sultan Salim. None of them were able to recognize Salim. However, Tuman Bey and his Commanders killed Salim's Commanders under his nose and escaped unhurt. Since Salim was safe, the fighting continued without a break.

Sultan Salim was left bewildered at the bravery shown by the Mamluk fighters. If it was not for his guns and artillery, he was sure he would not have had an edge on the Mamluks just because his force was large. However, Sultan Salim, without losing his composure made the best use of his artillery and kept killing enemy troops before their access to the first row of his army. It is a unique example in the history that the Mamluks died fighting just to show their valor. Twenty five thousand Mamluk soldiers fell in the battle but did not surrender, with the result only a few remained alive. And they tenaciously led Tuman Bey to safety in Azubia. It is a fact that all the Mamluks that died perished in the artillery attacks while the Ottoman soldiers were killed by sword or spear. The Mamluks had not a single gun to fire at their enemy because they considered the use of guns while fighting below their standard of valor. Since Tuman Bey was led to Azubia, Cairo was lying undefended and so seven days after the clash Sultan Salim occupied the Egyptian capital. In the meantime, the scattered Mamluk soldiers gathered around Tuman Bey in Azubia and a small force came into being.



On hearing, that Sultan Salim had occupied Cairo Tuman Bey took his troops and launched an attack on the Egyptian capital. Salim was then in his military camp outside the city. Tuman Bey made a sudden advance into Cairo and began to kill the occupying Turkish troops in a manner that none of them were able to save their lives. Tuman Bey restored the city and fortified every lane and by-lane every house in the city. When Sultan Salim attempted to enter the city, he experienced many impediments and hurdles everywhere and at the same time, it would have been a shameful sign of weakness for Sultan Salim leave Cairo unconquered. Even three days after continuous clashes, the Turkish army could not make any headway. Finding no way out he called the Mamluk commander Khairi, who had joined his camp during the battle of Ridwaniah, and asked him to suggest the way to success. Khairi told him to announce that those among the Mamluks laying down arms would be given peace and safety. With this declaration, fighting came to a halt and a number of Mamluk soldiers appeared before the Ottoman Sultan on their own while others were forced by the citizens to join the Turkish camp. Thus, eight hundred Mamluks very easily became captives of Sultan Salim. They all were killed on the advice of Khairi followed by an all-out massacre in the city.

Losing all hope of resistance Tuman Bey left Cairo and went to the desert tribes. The Ottoman force acted brutally and massacred fifty thousand Mamluks. During this action Qarat Bey, the right hand of Tuman Bey, went underground in Cairo. Shortly after finishing his task, Sultan Salim ordered his soldiers to go in search of Tuman Bey and Qarat Bey. On being informed that Tuman Bey had escaped the territory while Qarat Bey had gone into hiding in Cairo, he announced that, since the Mamluks had already lost their power, it would be an act of wisdom on his part to join him on the promise of safety of his life. Qarat Bey, being sure of his arrest in the immediate future accepted the offer and came to Sultan Salim.

Salim looked upon Qarat Bey and remarked: "On the day of the battle of Ridwaniah you appeared very brave on your horse but, at present, you are keeping silent. Qarat Bey told him that I am as brave as ever but the Ottomans are coward enough to make use of guns to establish

their bravery. During the rule of Sultan Qalzu Ghazi a European came with a gun and told him that it would be wise to distribute guns among the Mamluk soldiers. But the Sultan and his courtiers said in one voice that even the holding of a gun was an act of utter disgrace for them. The European then remarked before the open court that you would one day lose the rule of Egypt to the guns and you have won victory only at gunpoint. I believe that guns cannot become the basis of victory or defeat; swords and arrows can play a more effective role in warfare. We have been affected only because Allah Almighty has decided so. But your rule will also come to an end one day. Dynasties also have their limited age on this earth like men. Never think that you have achieved victory because you are more valiant". Thereupon Sultan Salim said, "Why have you been produced before me as a captive if you are so brave?" Qarat Bey replied, "By Allah, I don't consider myself as a captive. I have come here of my own and by trusting you. I am, therefore, quite free." The exchange of words between Salim and Qarat Bey had reached this point when Qarat Bey noticed Khairi Bey who was then among the supporters of the Ottoman ruler. He turned to Khairi Bey and condemned him in the strongest possible words. He then said addressing Sultan Salim, "He (Khairi) deserves to have his head cut off and thus punishing him for his guilt otherwise he will carry you to Hell also". On hearing this Sultan Salim fell in wrath and said, "I had decided to entrust some important military position to you. But you have violated the dignity of the royal court and behaved impertinently. You are perhaps, unaware that anyone who behaves rudely in the royal court deserves disgrace and punishment." Qarat Bey replied fearlessly "May Allah not bring me the day that I am employed by you and become one of your supporters."

Hearing this Sultan Salim grew furious and called his executioners. At this Qarat Bey said, "What's the use of cutting off my head when thousands of brave men are after your head, and Tuman Bey is also alive and working hard to take revenge on you"? However, when the executioners came and got ready to behead him he turned to Khairi Bey and said, "Come and carry my head and put it in the lap of your wife." These words were coming out of his lips when his head was cut off.

Tuman Bey had already started collecting Arab tribes to fight along side of him. When he succeeded in organizing a reasonable force he began to make attacks on the Ottoman troops. Salim kept sending corps after corps to face the Mamluks' attacks but they all were torn apart. Tuman Bey's force consisted of two parts because some scattered Mamluk fighters had joined him and he had organized some Arab tribes into a force. Both the Arabs and the Mamluks had developed hate against their rulers and hence they jointly rallied to Tuman Bey but the growing rivalry between the two parts of his force was causing concern to him.

Sultan Salim, after suffering a series of setbacks, sent word to Tuman Bey that on condition of his obedience and submission, he would recognize him as the king of Egypt, stop occupying their land and leave all the Egyptian territories for him. Since Sultan Salim had killed their Commander Qarat Bey and committed carnage in Egypt they tore the emissary into pieces. When Sultan Salim came to know of it, he killed three thousand Mamluk captives in retaliation, and sent a strong army along with artillery to take on Tuman Bey. The two forces clashed near the pyramids of Egypt. During the battle, the Arab and Mamluk soldiers fought with one another and started killing each other. The Ottoman artillery was, on the other hand, killing them both. Thus, the force under Tuman Bey was wiped out quickly. Frustrated and dejected, Tuman Bey escaped to an Arab chieftain who owed much to him but that ungrateful person caught him and sent him to Sultan Salim.

When the Ottoman ruler came to know that Tuman Bey was caught, he said in a fit of joy: "Egypt is conquered." When Tuman Bey drew near, Salim welcomed him like a king and held him in high esteem and kept him as an honorable guest. Sultan Salim's treatment of Tuman Bey filled Khairi and Ghazali with anxiety for these two traitors were sworn enemies of the Egyptian ruler. Sultan Salim now had the opportunity to implement his scheme of installing Tuman Bey as the king of Egypt by way of obligation and leave for Constantinople. They, however, spread their net very cautiously and began to give Sultan Salim information from various sources that tremendous efforts were being made to free Tuman Bey and put him

on the Egyptian throne and after being free, Tuman Bey would pose a grave danger to the Ottoman Empire. Sultan Salim, who was suffering from these troubles since he arrived in Egypt ordered Tuman Bey killed without loss of time. Thus came the end of Tuman Bey, the last Mamluk king on April 17, 1517 C.E. (922 A.H.).

Following the assassination of Tuman Bey the Ottoman ruler was under no threat from the former Egyptian rulers. However, he knew very well that keeping Egypt under Ottoman possession was not an easy task. The Mamluks were ruling in Egypt for several hundred years and were the inhabitants of Egypt. They had increased their population by purchasing slaves from the Caucasus. Gradually, they rose as a very strong and formidable ruling class in Egypt but the Arabs too were in such a large number that Egypt was considered an Arab country. Moreover, the Arab population of Egypt commanded much respect and influence religiously as well as politically because of their close relations with Syria and the Hijaz. The Copts and the Jews, the indigenous population of Egypt also wielded influence because of their services rendered as officials in the Accounts and Agricultural Departments. The people inhabiting the west-southern frontier provinces and territories had the capabilities of invading Egypt and occupying it at anytime. In the case that Sultan Salim appointed somebody as the Governor of Egypt, he wanted to be careful that he was not likely to rise in revolt with the support of Syria, the Hijaz and the people of the western territories. Also, if such a person were to be put in power that lacked courage and determination, he would not be able to put down any future revolt. Had Sultan Salim gone back immediately after the conquest of Egypt, the conquered country would have risen in revolt creating trouble for the Sultan. Salim, therefore, made a long stay in Egypt and studied the situation minutely. He had a plan to march to Tripoli and bring the entire of North Africa up to Morocco under his control but his troops refused to go ahead, with the result he had to go back to Constantinople.

After the conquest of Egypt it was very easy for Sultan Salim to annihilate the Mamluks from the country but he, very wisely, kept their number and strength intact and appointed Mamluk Commander Khairi as the Governor of Egypt with the permission that they could

hold their 24-member council or parliament as usual. They had the power and ability to elect a new ruler after the death or deposition of the one in power. Although the number of the members of parliament was to remain unchanged, the consent of the Ottoman king was declared as necessary. Along with this, the post of the Chief Justice was limited to the Arab commanders and this was certainly a wise decision. Collection of money and other financial responsibilities were entrusted to the Copts and the Jews. After setting up a three-tier system in administration Sultan Salim deployed five thousand cavalry and five hundred infantrymen from his own force under his renowned Commander, Khairuddin with the instructions that he should keep Cairo city and the central forts under his direct control and must not, in any case go out of the fixed limits. Thus, all the possible dangers were eliminated.

Following the conquest of Egypt Sultan Salim offered his Friday prayers in the Grand Mosque of Egypt. A very costly carpet was spread for the Sultan. When he came to the mosque, he disliked this preferential treatment and asked for the carpet to be removed and performed his prayers like the commanders. During the prayer, he was so overwhelmed with tender feelings that he began to weep bitterly. Following the conquest of Egypt Sultan Salim sent a team of first-rate architects and artisans to Constantinople as he had done in Tabriz. One can gauge from this his strong desire to enhance the beauty and grandeur of his capital. It is strange that despite his long stay in Egypt he took no interest in the Egyptian pyramids and never visited them. However, his interest in the mosques and madrasas of Egypt was very high. He added to the grace and dignity of the religious scholars and increased their daily allowance. Sultan Salim had decided while in Egypt that the conquest of Arabia was even more necessary. The sacred cities of Makkah and Madinah were under the control of Arab chiefs and no military action was needed to occupy these cities. What was necessary was the conquest of the hearts of the citizens. With this in mind, he lavished favors on the Arab chiefs and Sultan Salim was undisputedly recognized as the king of the Hijaz following the end of the Mamluk rule. The Arab chiefs could have opposed Sultan Salim as the ruler but, because of his favors and kindnesses, they themselves sent greetings to the Ottoman

ruler and gave him the title of the Servant of the Sanctuaries of Makkah and Madinah. The Abbasid Caliphs lived in Egypt with so much stately splendor and brotherhood as did the Roman Pope or Akbar Shah II and Bahadur Shah in Delhi. Even though they had neither any sovereignty nor a country nor any force but the rulers of Islamic countries would try to get from them some title to add to their power and position and they were treated as religious leaders.

Sultan Salim felt the power and influence of the Abbasid Caliphs. Thus, he made the last Caliph agree to abdicate the Caliphate and hand over the standard, the sword and the shield to the Ottoman ruler and recognize him (Salim) as the Caliph of the Muslims. He then pledged his allegiance to Sultan Salim. Now a real Caliph took over the charge of the Caliphate instead of a nominal one. The Caliph is the highest authority for the Muslims and Sultan Salim was, undoubtedly, the mightiest Muslim king of those days. In 923 A.H. Sultan Salim set out from Egypt along with one thousand camels loaded with gold and silver. He also took the last Abbasid Caliph with him. He had covered a distance of a few miles from Cairo when he told his Prime Minister, Yunus, who was marching and talking along with him on his own horse, that very soon they would step into Syrian territory. The Prime Minister said in reply that they were going back after spoiling half of their troops and handing over the charge of Egypt to the very people they had taken it from. Yunus also said to him that he could not understand what benefit they had gained by invading Egypt. Hearing this Sultan Salim ordered the cavalryman accompanying him to cut off his (Yunus's) head and the order was implemented at once. Sultan Salim was very hard on his ministers and courtiers but was equally soft on religious scholars. Yunus was, in fact, against the conquest of Egypt right from the beginning and he had opposed the original decision to invade and he had only repeated his position. However, this much can be said without any fear of contradiction that the conquest of Egypt had enhanced the glory of the Ottoman Dynasty. Sultan Salim took about two years in conquering Egypt and making his return journey. During this period, he had brought Syria, Arabia and Egypt to the fold of the Ottoman rule and the greatest benefit of all, was that he had invaded Egypt only as Sultan Salim but he was the Caliph of the Muslims and the leader of the Muslim world on his return.

Sultan Salim stayed in Damascus for several years. Some accounts support the view that from Damascus he went to perform Hajj while others contradict it. However, Sultan Salim established relations with the Arab chiefs and took the oath of allegiance from them. From Damascus, he came to Aleppo (Halb) and made a long stay there. In order to make the administration work efficiently he divided Syria into small parts under separate governors, thus, putting an end to the threat of revolts. From there, he reached Constantinople in 924 A.H.

On his return to Constantinople, Sultan Salim received the tribute of Cyprus from Venice, which it paid to the Mamluks of Egypt in the past. The Venetians not only paid the tribute but promised to keep on paying in the future also.

The Christian ruler of Spain sent his envoy to Sultan Salim requesting him to give protection to the Christians going to Syria and Palestine as pilgrims. Immediately granting the petition the Ottoman ruler gave word that Christian pilgrims would suffer no harm within the confines of his rule. The peace treaty with the king of Hungary was also coming to its end. Thus, the Hungarian ruler also requested for an extension and Sultan Salim granted it immediately. The Ottoman Sultan's conquests in Asia and Africa did not go unnoticed as far as the Europeans were concerned. Sultan Salim extended his territories considerably and was conferred with the title of the Caliph of the Muslims. European powers were shuddering at the very thought of an Ottoman invasion. Thus following the return of Sultan Salim from Egypt the European powers began to send peace proposals along with their offers of allegiance. Although Sultan Salim was temperamentally very harsh, he was very far-sighted too and had his eye on the consequences of every step taken. He was not so gullible as to be carried away by flattering remarks. He was also well aware of mischief and activities of intrigue. He had established a large and mighty empire by conquering Egypt, Syria, the Hijaz, Iraq and western Iran. Thus, his empire had extended over the three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe. His next target was the conquest of Europe as a whole and he was not at all negligent in this regard. He knew very well that his ancestors had been making all-out efforts to conquer the continent. Historians are unanimous that Sultan Salim



was a devoutly religious person and was full of a religious sense of honor. However, it seems strange that Sultan Salim had always been engaged in fighting with the Muslim states and he conquered Muslim countries throughout his reign. It was because his experience and observation had taught him that the religious sense among the Muslims had considerably weakened and evils of all kinds had made progress against their Islamic character. The open clash between Timur and Bayazid was the clear evidence of this malaise. Sultan Muhammad II had brought peace to some extent by putting an end to the Christian rule in Constantinople but periodic revolts in Asia Minor remained a source of constant worry for the Ottoman kings. Ismail Safwi's mischief and secret planning had occupied Sultan Salim's attention right from the day of his accession. Hence, he managed to ward off threats from the eastern side by punishing the Shi'ite's of Iran and annexing its provinces. The large-scale massacre of the Shi'a sect in Asia Minor had minimized the possibilities of any plot against his territories. Since the Islamic rulers of Egypt had made use of force against the Ottomans in connection with Prince Jamshed, the Egyptian threat was not considered at all small. Sultan Salim thought it proper to bring Egypt under control before dealing with the Christian countries otherwise the Christians could instigate the Egyptians against the Ottomans. Now the European conquest was his next obvious step but Sultan Salim was prudent enough to avoid any hasty measures against the Europeans following his return from Egypt. He gave preference to the task of putting internal affairs of his country on right lines and finding time for strengthening his military machine. In the meantime the Christian kings, one after another, began their efforts to make peace with him and he readily accepted their peace proposals but without stopping his war preparations. Shortly after his return from Egypt, he started building ships and set up several shipyards. One hundred and fifty warships, each weighing about seven hundred tons, were ready in record time. One hundred small ships were built in addition. There was a total ban on taking the ships out to sea for sailing. Once he saw a warship sailing along the coast of Constantinople and grew so furious that he was about to order the killing of the Admiral. However, some commanders and ministers saved the Admiral by convincing the king that the ship was on a test run shortly after being built.



Besides shipyards, Sultan Salim set up a number of arms factories for manufacturing guns, artillery and gunpowder. Along with this, a large-scale recruiting drive was on. Moreover, a strong force armed with modern weapons was ready to come into action on very short notice. Sultan Salim's ministers were, in view of these large-scale preparations of the land force and navy, awaiting a big event but they were still unaware of what was going to happen. Although he consulted his minister and advisors on various issues, he kept crucial matters a secret. He never took any step in haste but once he resolved to do something, he would not budge from his decision. He was a man of courage and determination and anybody asking him to change his opinion would lose his life. Thus after a long campaign against the Muslim rulers and conquering a number of Muslim countries he was certainly making military preparations against the European powers. Since he wanted to leave nothing to chance, he was reorganizing his forces leaving no loophole anywhere.

Sultan Salim was desperately engaged in his military preparations when he passed away on Shawwal 6, 926 A.H. (September 22, 1520 C.E.) and left the task of conquering Europe to his son Sultan Sulaiman Azam.

Sultan Salim marched from Constantinople on Shawwal 1, 926 A.H. to Adrianople. He was encamped on the way to Adrianople when he developed a boil on his thigh. His physicians advised him against riding but he would not pay heed until the boil took a serious turn and he succumbed to it.

### **A Review of the Reign of Sultan Salim**

Sultan Salim ruled for eight years, eight months and eight days, but he achieved such marvelous success as a conqueror that many mighty kings with longer reigns did not approach. The greatest trait of his character was that even at the height of rage and fury he held religious scholars in esteem. He put ministers and commanders to death for slight mistakes and hence they feared him greatly. But religious scholars and guides were free from his wrath. Once he grew angry with the officials of the Finance Department and issued death

sentences for them. When Qadi Jamali of Constantinople heard of it he called on the Sultan and asked him to withdraw his order for they were not liable for capital punishment. Sultan Salim told the Qadi that he should not meddle in administrative affairs. The Qadi said to him: "You keep your eye on the welfare of your country, but I want your welfare in the next world. Whatever the expediency behind your order is, it will bring you destruction in the life Hereafter. Allah Almighty bestows his favor and reward on one who shows pity and chastises the cruel. Thus, the wise counseling of the Qadi caused Salim to change his mind and he ordered all of them set free.

Similarly, Sultan Salim once ordered that the export of silk to Iran be stopped. As a follow-up action, he ordered the arrest all such traders in Constantinople and those carrying silk to Iran. They were four hundred in all and their properties were to be confiscated and their heads were to be cut off by the order of the Sultan. At the time, Sultan Salim was about to leave for Adrianople and Qadi Jamali was accompanying him. He interceded with the Sultan for those condemned to death. The Sultan replied, "It is rather justified to kill one-third for the welfare of two-thirds of the citizens and what could be more of a major corruption than going against the orders of the king". The Qadi replied, "They can not be held responsible for the court order had not reached them." Had the Prime Minister talked to the Sultan so boldly he would have lost his life. But even at the height of anger, he could ask the Qadi not to meddle in the state affairs. Qadi Jalali grew furious and left without seeking permission and without showing due regard to the Sultan. Sultan Salim kept staring at him silently in a state of amazement. A few minutes later, he bowed his head, thought for sometime and ordered the release of the condemned traders along with the confiscated goods. Following this Sultan Salim sent a message to Qadi Jalali appointing him the Chief Qadi of the entire Ottoman Empire. Although Qadi Jalali declined the offer, Sultan Salim kept showing favor to him.

Sultan Salim's reign was noted by the world for its religious significance. During his period, the Ottomans replaced the Islamic Caliphate of the Abbasids, and Caliphs with power and authority were now at the helm instead of nominal ones. Martin Luther began reforms in Christianity at the same time, which was a result of the

coming of the Muslims into Europe. Kabir Das started his own religious order in India during the same period. Kabir had died at Magher near Gorakhpur in 924 A.H. He was contemporary of Sultan Sikander Lodhi. During the Reign of Sultan Salim, in 922 A.H the pocket watch was invented.

Sultan Salim had in mind that following his conquest of the Christian countries he would bring all the Christians to the fold of Islam and wipe out all foreign elements from his territories. Thus, he expressed his opinion to convert churches into mosques. Having heard this some Christians appeared before the Sultan and submitted that his forefathers had given them full religious freedom and promised protection to their churches and non-interference with their religious affairs. Religious scholars of Sultan Salim's courts supported the statement of the Christians and Qadi Jamali also interceded for them. Thus, the Sultan held back from such an action. Christian historians appear to be very unhappy with Sultan Salim and held his religious interests to be his demerit but this is sheer prejudice on their part. Their dislike of him is a glaring proof of his divine nature and virtues and the countries conquered by Sultan Salim remained under Turkish control. Sultan Salim did not rule for long and died at the age of 52 had he lived a little longer he would have conquered Europe as a whole. He was also the first Caliph in the Ottoman Dynasty.

THE END